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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

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CULTURAL OSMOSIS

Mr. E. M. Forster is right when he says, in introducing Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar's recently published *Literature and Authorship in India:*—

It is unwise to ignore sensitiveness: you may win the short battle by so doing but you will lose the long one and will be condemned by the tribunal of history. It is unwise to suppose that culture is unimportant and that distance in space and differences in idiom are a sufficient excuse for superciliousness and obtuseness.

The ancient Indian poet who prayed to be spared the fate of "having to submit delicate things of beauty to the obtuse" was an unconscious prophet of his country's, nay, of modern Asia's, plight. For, though Mr. Forster is addressing his remonstrance to his countrymen for their indifference to India's culture, his words have a wider application. Europe and America in general must answer to the same indictment of knowing little and caring less about the vivid, varied culture of the Orient.

The last centuries have seen a vast spread of the sway of Western nations over Asiatic lands, but there has not been a proportional increase in assimilation of the cultures of the territories thus brought within the Western sphere of influence or under Western rule. Without such assimilation, amalgamation is not possible, nor is the achievement of organic unity. Such acquisition of territories may be likened to the physiological phenomenon of taking food. In any healthy organism ingestion is followed without a break by digestion and assimilation of everything that can be built into the bodily structure. A break in the process may mean discomfort, pain, disease and, if long continued, death. International groupings are organisms. When the extent of added territories is greater than the assimilative power, when, as it were, the reach exceeds the grasp, the necessary conditions are absent for healthy growth or even sometimes for the maintenance of the *status quo*. With-

out assimilation of another people's culture how can there be appreciation of its background, understanding of its difficulties, sympathy with its aspirations ?

Galsworthy traces all the troubles of our time, disharmony and greed, ugliness and restlessness, cruelty and wars, to there not being enough lovers of beauty among men :—

Men may have a mint of sterling qualities—be vigorous, adventurous, brave, upright, and self-sacrificing ; be preachers and teachers ; keen, cool-headed, just, industrious—if they have not the love of beauty they will still be making wars.

He was not far wrong. True beauty is the hall-mark of the spirit. Not for the form itself is any cultural expression to be valued so much as for the beauty which that form enshrines. And beauty knows no geographical frontiers.

Æsthetic obtuseness is no better than intellectual stupidity. Wordsworth's philistine *vis-à-vis* the yellow primrose is a not uncommon type. Such a man may be successful in business but he is a cultural moron all the same. Human evolution is only partly measurable in terms of increased control of the instrument and the environment. Increase of sensitiveness is no less important a criterion.

To return to the homely simile of ingestion and assimilation. The inability of the body to absorb particular nutritional elements is a symptom of disease. Unless there is lowered ability of the tissues to absorb a certain element, such as sugar in the case of diabetics, the nutritional value is only to a limited extent dependent on the medium. Wheat is wheat, whether in English bun or Indian puri, and all can learn to relish foreign fare.

There are those whose pulses are not quickened by beauty under any guise. But for the rest, if they but lay aside their insularity, beauty is beauty, whether in European stained-glass window or Ajanta painting. Canons of beauty differ and change, but only in so far as they are defective. The truly beautiful achieves a quasi-immortality. The meretricious may be praised today but it is sure to sink into deserved oblivion tomorrow. The beauty that we cannot recognise today, as shining through an unfamiliar medium, tomorrow may reward our study and enrich our lives.

Europe has, as Mr. Forster says of England, sent out soldiers and administrators and money-makers to the East, but few scholars and fewer artists. And Eastern scholars and artists who might have served as interpreters of the feelings of their people and their ways of expressing those feelings have not been adequately welcomed anywhere in the West.

The converse is only partly true. We are not thinking of Japan, which has adopted Western civilisation *en bloc*, with devastating thoroughness. Many in the East have made most earnest efforts to absorb the

culture, as distinguished from the civilisation, of the West. The English poets, the Russian masters of fiction, have exerted no less powerful an influence upon the literary development of the East than the Western thinkers have upon its political theories. The effort is commendable in so far as it has sought the understanding of an alien culture, in so far as there has been emulation, not imitation; adaptation, not blind adoption of unfamiliar canons; discriminating selection, not blind acceptance of exotic ways. True, an ebb-tide has set in which must be checked; "rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind."

The point that we want to make here is that *reciprocal* give and take is a primary condition of wholesome relationship. Take all and give nothing and you are an exploiter and a despot. Give all and take nothing and you play the philanthropist at the expense of your beneficiary's self-respect. The West has taken from the Asiatic countries much in physical wealth which they could ill afford to lose. But Asia's cultural riches, which she could have shared without impoverishment, have largely been ignored. The impact of Western culture upon the East has, as said, been culturally stimulating. It is to the West's inestimable loss that she does not seek payment in cultural kind. All these years she has, so to say, been carrying away triumphantly common lead when there have been and are diamonds of the spirit for the taking. The East has not withheld them, but the willingness to receive has not been equal to the readiness to instruct.

The promotion of a living synthesis between Eastern and Western thought is one of the important aims for which THE ARYAN PATH was launched and is conducted. For cultural osmosis is the cure for mutual suspicions, rivalries and failure to appreciate each other's best.

So much depends on genuine *rapprochement* between East and West that it should not be left to casual contacts to effect a blend of ideologies. The average traveller is an indifferent cultural ambassador. There should be planned exchange of some of our best minds as well as of our noblest works of art. Exchange professorships and scholarships are well-established institutions in the West. The Universities of Asia should be drawn into the scheme. The possibilities of cultural osmosis for mutual gain and for world amity are vast indeed.

TAGORE AND SCIENCE

[**Shri P. G. Shah** brings out here a little-realised facet of Rabindranath Tagore's world-view. As is to be expected of such a great synthetic mind, he gave science its proper place—a means and nothing more than a means, for the knowledge of the physical universe—what grammar is to the understanding of a poem.—ED.]

When the history of the Renaissance in India in the twentieth century comes to be written Rabindranath Tagore will occupy a prominent place. Even though no more, he stands as a beacon shedding lustre far and wide throughout this ancient land. Though known by the universal and endearing epithets of "Poet" and "*Gurudev*," and though his fame rests on his numerous works as a dramatist, a novelist, a philosopher and a thinker, little is known about him as a realistic student of modern science, its method and its philosophy.

The present writer was brought into direct contact with the scientific mind of the poet when the latter had planned to write a text-book of science in Bengali and had asked for the co-operation of workers in scientific terminology in the regional languages of India. In a long talk during one of his visits to Bombay about ten years ago, the poet discussed his views on simplifying scientific terminology without eschewing Western words. Though described as a dreamer and a visionary he has always remained on *terra firma*, as was made clear during these discussions, and it is a matter for satisfaction that the present writer's views on the subject had a large measure of support from this unexpected quarter. The poet's text-book on Science in Bengali was not published till 1938 but not only the title *Vishvaparichaya*, also the masterly and comprehensive treatment of science in all its branches demonstrates the deep scientific background of the mind of this great literary genius.

A man of international contacts like Tagore, who had travelled round the world not once but several times and who had closely examined the progress of new countries like Russia and Japan, could not have escaped the influence of science. There is sufficient internal evidence in his writings to indicate that his study of science was not skin-deep, and his metaphors and similes evince deep scientific study. For want of space I have omitted long quotations but a reader taking up any of his serious books like *The Religion of Man* or *Creative Unity* will find a large number of scientific phrases like "dark bands in the spectrum of our consciousness," "chronic malignity of a disease," and "explosive atoms whirling in space" which exhibit a wonderful familiarity with scientific thought and literature.

If Maharshi Debendranath Tagore dedicated Santiniketan to India, the greatest monument of the poet Tagore is the "Shri Niketan"—the institute of rural reconstruction. Visva-Bharati, the international centre of culture, never satisfied the inner soul of the poet, whose heart always yearned for the realistic and scientific solution of the problems of the country. The mere enumeration of the departments at this institute of rural reconstruction ("Shri-Niketan") gives a picture of the mind of Tagore: agriculture, dairying, animal husbandry, poultry-raising, carpentry, smithing, weaving, tanning, sanitation and health-work. His graphic condemnation of city life's proving a burden on the rural life of the country is worded in brilliant language, showing a scientific grasp of the problems as well as the feeling heart of a social worker :—

Cities there must be in man's civilization, just as in higher organisms there must be organized centres of life, such as the brain, heart or stomach. These never overwhelm the wholeness of the body; on the contrary, by a perfect federation of their functions they maintain its richness. But a tumour, round which the blood is congested, is the enemy of the whole body upon which it feeds as it swells. Our modern cities, in the same way, feed upon the whole social organism that runs through the villages; they continually drain away the life-stuff of the community, and slough off a huge amount of dead matter, while assuming a lurid counterfeit of prosperity. Thus, unlike a living heart, these cities imprison and kill the blood and create poison centres filled with the accumulation of death.

Even though he thus condemned the congested and artificial life of cities, he never departed from the conception of organic evolution of village life as a whole. His centre of culture, his ideal of a university is described thus :—

Our centre of culture should not only be the centre of the intellectual life of India but the centre of her economic life also. It must co-operate with the villages round it, cultivate land, breed cattle, spin clothes, press oil from oil seeds; it must produce all the necessaries, devising the best means, using the best materials and calling science to its aid.[1]

Science was a subject dear to the heart of Tagore, and his study and exposition of the philosophy and the facts of science were so thorough that he could beard a scientist like Einstein in his own den. In the brilliant conversation at Einstein's residence in Germany, between the propounder of the theory of relativity and the philosophic interpreter of Indian philosophy, it is Tagore, who fights his battle with the weapons of his opponent, that comes out more successful and who compels the scientist to exclaim at the end of the interview, "I am more religious than you are!" In explaining that the divine according to him is not isolated from the world, and that the infinite personality of man

[1] *Creative Unity*, p. 193.

comprehends the universe, the poet illustrates with a scientific fact.

Matter is composed of protons and electrons with gaps between them: but matter may seem to be solid. Similarly, —humanity is composed of individuals, yet they have their interconnection of human relationship, which gives solidarity to man's world.

Here are some more of Tagore's sallies:—

This world is a human world—the scientific view of it is also that of a scientific man.

Science is concerned with that which is not confined to individuals, it is the impersonal human world of truths.

In science we go through the discipline of eliminating the personal limitations of our individual minds and thus reach that comprehension of truth which is the mind of the Universal Man.

But Tagore, though a lover of science, was never a blind worshipper at its shrine. While appreciating its achievements and its glories, he recognised its misuse as caused by inherent limitations of the average human mind. The contributions of science to the methods of study, its constant insistence on reality and exactness, its impersonal judgment of evidence, has made all students, even of subjects like history, economics, law, literature and poetry, constantly appeal to scientific methods of investigation in their own subjects. In addition, the spirit of science, the humility of the scientific investigator, the self-abnegation, self-sacrifice and devotion of the scientist, as evinced in the lives of all great scientists throughout the world, form a glorious chapter in the history of the advancement of human knowledge. The abuse of science for the cruel purposes of war and personal aggrandisement is not due to the inherent weakness of Science. Put it to the moral failure of the leaders of society. Even poets and philosophers throughout the ages have been used by the princes in power for personal gains, and the misuse of science indicates the bankruptcy of human civilisation caused by its own lack of appreciation of spiritual values.

If the dazzle of a material and utilitarian civilisation prevents man from realising the inherent superiority of honesty and contentment as positive virtues in the life of nations, and if ruthless self-aggrandisement either in individuals or nations cannot be cured—even if the lessons of anthropology and psychology are lost on politicians and militaristic leaders of society—it must be recognised that science has given help in reducing the self-inflicted suffering caused by war, pestilence, ignorance and famine. Tagore's significant words are:—

I am not foolish to condemn science as materialistic. No truth can be that. Science means intellectual probity in our knowledge and dealings with the physical world, and such consciousness has a spiritual quality that encourages sacrifice and martyrdom. But in science the oft-used half-truth that

"honesty is the best policy" is completely made true.

While appreciating science, like a true seer Tagore was prepared to give it a proper place of dignity and utility.

Science has its proper place in analysing this world as a construction, just as grammar has its legitimate office in analysing the syntax of a poem. But the world as a creation is not a mere construction. It is a poem, which we are apt to forget, when grammar takes excessive hold of our minds.

With this wise reservation, Tagore is a great supporter of science and the scientific attitude of mind which he acclaims in no uncertain terms :—

Science is Europe's great gift to humanity for all time to come. We in India must claim it from her hands, and gratefully accept it in order to be saved from the curse of futility by lagging behind.

P. G. SHAH

BEAUTY

Of interest in connection with Shri O. C. Gangoly's "Buddhism and the Cultivation of Beauty," which appeared in our January issue, is Mr. T. F. Harvey Jacob's "Artist, Spectator and the Subconscious" in *The Dublin Magazine*, October-December 1943. The Western concept of art and its function, as the latter defines it, has certain points of approach, under its different terminology, to the æsthetic theory of ancient India. Mr. Jacob repudiates the attitude that "art has nothing to do with philosophy or morals or ordinary human emotions." He quotes Dean Inge :—

> Beauty gives neither information nor advice, but it satisfies a part of our nature which is not less divine than that which pays homage to truth and goodness.

The perception of beauty, in Mr. Jacob's view, is "something immediate, and hardly at all dependent upon detailed examination or the thoughts aroused by prolonged acquaintance with the beautiful object." Intense æsthetic satisfaction consists largely, he claims, in "*unconscious* associations," "a 'multiplication of echoes'" from the contents of the subconscious mind.

Substitute "superconscious" for "unconscious" and "subconscious" and you have a clue to Shri Gangoly's claim for the regenerating power of certain Buddhist works of art. For the source of the highest art is not emotional but spiritual. The release of his own emotions was not the serious artist's aim in ancient India or ancient Greece. The ancient works of art were deliberately designed as supports of contemplation, to effect, as Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy has put it, "our own metrical reintegration through the imitation of divine forms."

THE POET'S INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD

[**R. L. Megroz,** distinguished poet and critic, essays here the assessment of imponderables, which often are more real than objectivity itself. The poet's highest function is to help keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. "The body's instinct for self-preservation is not more fundamental than the mind's conviction of a larger-than-life reality." But it is not necessary to regard the poet as the spokesman of "the unconscious will of mankind," to concede Mr. Megroz's point of the greatness of his influence. There *is* a mysterious dream foundation of our collective consciousness, formed of the floating reminiscences of the race and the broken links of the chain of time which those reminiscences unite. Upon that common fund of images created by man's thinking the poet may indeed draw, but if he be a true genius the result is *sui generis*. The "divine energy" that finds expression through the poet's pen is not, then, from "the dreaming mind of the race." The true poet's apprehensions of reality come from the superconscious, his own diviner part. The flame of true genius is lit by the hand of one's own Spirit. That, in the ordinary man, is veiled from view; through genius it shines forth.—ED.]

No sooner do we look for practical consequences of poetry than there arise some stubborn old difficulties of definition. Some of these difficulties can be side-stepped here, for the argument has to cover much ground inside the short span of this article. I can count on a rough measure of general agreement about the meaning of "poet" and "poetry," for instance, though it is worthy of note that in essentials the argument here could apply to "poet" in a wider than the literary sense. It happens to be most convenient to consider especially the masters of language and to take their work as the most obvious manifestation of the creative power which we believe influences and moulds the world of men.

The "world" is not a pretty picture today, and it is not surprising if impatient and defeatist critics of all kinds are often content with a bitter and sweeping generalisation before turning a contemptuous back upon the prospect. This is however a very futile gesture, since the critic is ineradicably a part of the world. The bitter and desperate attitude is usually the result of concentrating too much on the more striking and temporary factors of social disintegration. It requires to be emphasised today that the mass violence and destruction of *war is not necessarily the prime danger at all. Rather is it a symptom of more enduring and perilous evils.* The seemingly more trivial consequences of human greed and stupidity which in combination so often frustrate the nobler motives are far more serious in their implications. The lowering of standards of behaviour by individuals and groups, the numerous little antisocial vic-

tories of the meaner motives in the human make-up, do gradually eat into the moral foundations of society. Every worker who has no care to do his job well, whatever it may be; every individual of influence and power who in action is egotistical and selfish; every committee—whether public or private—which stultifies itself by putting truth and justice aside to avoid influential disapproval—all these are familiar and typical traitors to the general welfare, and not one of us can pretend that such things have nothing to do with ourselves.

But what has the poet to do with the ills of society? Is he not necessarily indifferent to such things, being dedicated to the pursuit of subjective experience? No, perhaps this need not be argued. Even Walter Pater's æsthetic philosophy did not go quite so far as that, though it is safer to recall the extremely romantic view of the poet before considering the reality.

It becomes easier then to realise that the typical poet's conflict with the world is always and primarily with the chicaneries and deadly meannesses of individuals and groups who shelter behind the established society that they are undermining. So to take up a just attitude we need only remind ourselves that this conflict of the poet with the world is implicit in the creative spirit, and is not confined to poets in the narrowest sense.

Another point. The poet may not be ostensibly attacking a particular evil when writing poetry. Usually he is not. Sometimes he is. Shakespeare for example in most of his work is by no means the explicit critic who wrote:—

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimmed in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscalled simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill....

Nor is Milton's poetry usually an explicit statement of such directed anger as it is in the sonnet of "The Late Massacres in Piedmont."

A still more extreme example is that of the self-centred dreamer, Rossetti, who while still young so surprisingly wrote that sonnet, "The Refusal of Aid Between Nations." I hope every reader remembers it, but lest some do not:—

Not that the earth is changing, O my God!
Nor that the seasons totter in their walk,—
Not that the virulent ill of act and talk
Seethes ever as a winepress ever trod,—
Not therefore are we certain that the rod
Weighs in thine hand to smite thy world; though now
Beneath thine hand so many nations bow,
So many kings:—not therefore, O my God!—
But because Man is parcelled out in men
Today; because, for any wrongful blow
No man not stricken asks, "I would be told
Why thou dost thus;" but his heart whispers then,
"He is he, I am I." By this we know
That our earth falls asunder, being old.

These examples of explicit criticism of society are representative of poets generally, first in the kinds of

meanness, cruelty and selfishness which are targets of their wrath, and also in that they are a very small portion of the poet's work. Having emphasised the existence of this direct criticism in poetry and the fact that it comprises a comparatively unimportant part of the creative effort of poets, we can approach with firmer steps to the essential nature of the poet's power over society.

It is very convenient and space-saving to refer at once to Shelley's "Defence of Poetry." This is so well worth rereading, even by the very latest version of the perennial Snob of culture, that it is a public service to mention it out loud, as if it had only just been published.

It is easier to accept the claim that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world" if we remember that Shelley carefully avoided attributing any such intention to them. Indeed he insisted on likening the poet's disinterested activity to that of a nightingale singing to cheer himself in the dark, and maintained that though men were moved and elevated by his words they did not know how or why. But—no hesitation in statement here—poetry remains "the source of whatever of beautiful or generous or true can have place in an evil time."

Shelley naturally included as poets all creative writers in prose, not least the philosophers, from Plato to Bacon, and today he would certainly have stressed the inclusion of story-tellers like the author of *Erewhon* and playwrights like the author of *Heartbreak House*. If the general view of the poet and of poetry were still as just as Shelley's, it would not be possible to think of a W. B. Yeats, for instance, as an important poet of his period without thinking also of such authors.

But this implies a wide range of work, in which the application of the poet's thought to problems of society may be as obvious as it is in *Erewhon* or as remote and indirect as it is in the lyrics of *The Wind in the Reeds*. Nevertheless indirectness of application is nothing—all depends on the survival of power to influence other minds, not rationally but imaginatively. But behind the poet's integrity is a deep hatred of whatever degrades human nature.

How then can we define what the poet does for the community? The work of art is more than a representation of images passing by in the stream of time. It is also more than the result of selection and rearrangement of sensory impressions. Besides these characteristics of the work of art there is also necessarily an expression of belief, the kind of inherent, possibly merely implicit but essential belief that Blake meant when he wrote that if the Sun should doubt he'd immediately go out. This belief is to the imagination what air is to the lungs. *The body's instinct for self-preservation is not more fundamental than the mind's conviction of a larger-than-life reality*. The poet's gift of expres-

siveness makes him a spokesman of mankind's deepest knowledge.

It seems highly suggestive that many resemblances can be traced between the experiences of the creative process and those of religious mysticism. Dr. Rosamund Harding's book, *An Anatomy of Inspiration*, is mainly a compilation of testimony about the ways and means of artistic creation, but in it the reader will find interesting comparisons. Thus the stories of absorption and absence of mind of men and women of genius when "compelled" by an idea are often comparable with the devotee's rapture; so too are their tribulations in the periods of dryness, depression and doubt.

Interesting in our context is also the conclusion that Dr. Harding is led to by the testimony she has collected.

> Inspiration places the recipient for the time being into a phase of existence different from that of his everyday world because in working out his theories in the pursuit of his artistic creation his own wishes and desires are overruled by his knowledge of natural sequences of events, colours, forms, rhythms, tones. This may be summed up by saying he follows and must follow where the truth leads him.

This devout and disinterested pursuit of truth in the guise of beauty is to the poet a pleasure, however arduous the effort involved; indeed it is better regarded as creative play than work, and as such is in itself a model of the most desirable state of existence for an individual. The finest Utopia ever envisaged could not improve on this strenuous and creative play as a substitute for the routine drudgeries of the individual in our present society. Thus, whatever sordid or tragic elements there may be in his life, the poet is, as poet, himself an image of the richer life that all human beings could live in that paradisal society which Man has never ceased dreaming of, praying for, and—as some thinkers maintain—remembering from some far past age of gold.

But there is more than an image and a promise of the better world in the creations of the poets. These are charged with a positive spiritual energy that influences the environment of the most autocratic of rulers not less than that of the State's humblest subject. As Tolstoy demonstrated in *War and Peace*, the apparently all-powerful sovereign and the "great" military commander are both the slaves of a necessity that they and their contemporaries do not realise. This unrealised compulsion of events comes from the dreaming mind of the race. The highest and most subtle statecraft can do no more than prepare the way for that unconscious will of mankind whose chief spokesman is the poet. It could be shown that through all the vicissitudes of civilisation the artists (and the scientists too) have been seeking forms which will externalise and control the divine energy that is in the dreaming mind. The forms found by the poet convey that divine energy through

language. Each word of the poet, declared Browning, writing of Shelley, "is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought."

To sum up: Shelley said truly that poetry is

> the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds....It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sand.

The language is charged with renewed energy to express the poet's apprehensions of reality in concrete forms of beauty. The creating of such forms is as severe and accurate a mental process as a scientific investigation, though it may be less fully conscious.

The poet's perceptions thus leave their traces on the world by affecting other minds, enlarging, enfranchising and sensitising them through contact, by the medium of words, with the divine impulse in life.

R. L. MEGROZ

THE POWER OF LOVE

My children, know Love is not Love alone,
But in her name lie many names concealed:
For she is Death, imperishable Force,
Desire unmixed, wild Frenzy, Lamentation;
In her are summed all impulses that drive
To Violence, Energy, Tranquillity.
Deep in each living breast the Goddess sinks,
And all become her prey; the tribes that swim,
The fourfoot tribes that pace upon the earth,
Harbour her; and in birds her wing is sovereign,
In beasts, in mortal men, in gods above.
What god but wrestles with her and is thrown?
If I may tell—and truth is right to tell—
She rules the heart of Zeus without a spear,
Without a sword. Truly the Cyprian
Shatters all purposes of men and gods.

SOPHOCLES

ROMAIN ROLLAND AND INDIA

[**Dr. A. Aronson, M. A. (Cantab.) PH. D.,** of Santiniketan, Bengal, is a frequent contributor to several of our Indian journals, especially to *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, *The Modern Review*, and *The Calcutta Review*. He is also the author of *Rabindranath Through Western Eyes* which was reviewed in our November 1943 number. We are glad to publish his article on such a powerful contemporary figure as Romain Rolland, bringing out especially his relationship to our India.—ED.]

Romain Rolland's preoccupation with things Eastern, and in particular with India, is not the result of some abstract and purely intellectual conflict between the principles of contemplation and action, between the Oriental tendency towards introspection and the Occidental conception of a permanent dualism in the life of man: India for Romain Rolland was, first and foremost, an intensely personal experience, indeed almost a revelation which from his early youth served the purpose of creating an equilibrium, a stability, so sadly lacking in the life of most Westerners. The intensity of Rolland's Indian experience explains both his strength and his weakness as a champion of Indian thought and culture. Frequently purely mental phenomena are invested with an emotional glamour foreign to them, and, on the other hand, the Westerner's attempt to rationalise sometimes brings about an (to Indians) almost intolerable anti-climax and bathos. Whenever exaggerated emotions or rationalisation are introduced, Rolland the Frenchman seems to lose himself in an indefinite vagueness which at times is both painful and disconcerting.

Personal experiences, however, are undoubtedly of this kind: they begin as a voyage of discovery, exploring ever new vistas in as yet unconquered territory, until some unsurmountable obstacle is reached, a mountain which it requires superhuman strength to cross. Here the explorer hesitates, casting lingering glances at the snow-covered peaks and looking for valleys which would lead across the mountain to the plains beyond. And when, after overcoming all the difficulties, the tired traveller sets foot on the promised land, the sudden light blurs his vision, and blind and weary he stumbles across the plains. But he knows that it was worth it: for there is fulfilment in discovery and a never-ending joy in having reached one's destination.

Romain Rolland's Indian experience was such a voyage of discovery. Not the painstaking labours of a philologist, nor the far-fetched comparisons of a philosopher, nor the preconceived ideas of a social reformer nor the sentimentalising glorifications of a poet: it was an almost inborn tendency, inevitable

like life itself. And Rolland knew it, when he wrote in a letter :—

I am a Frenchman of France born in the heart of France in a family which has been nurtured on the soil for centuries. And when I was barely twenty I had no knowledge of the religions and philosophies of India.... I believe therefore that there is some direct family affinity between an Aryan of the Occident and an Aryan of the Orient. And I am convinced...that it was I who must have descended down the slopes of the Himalayas along with those victorious Aryans. I have their blue blood flowing in my veins.[1]

Let us follow Rolland on this voyage of discovery. The journey will lead us across many gigantic rivers, each one a landmark in the explorer's progress. And only after having crossed all of them, will Rolland realise that they all flow into the same ocean and that the same clouds shed their rain on all of them alike.

The fascination for Rolland of human greatness is of an intensely complex kind. The genius of three great artists attracted him before the last war ; three men in whom a continual and self-destructive dualism was striving for a solution beyond the boundaries of common human experience : Tolstoy, Beethoven, and Michelangelo. The struggle of the artist with his own art, with the limitations imposed upon him by his medium of self-expression, the word, the sound, tone and colour, the ever-repeated attempts to express the inexpressible, his ultimate failure to give the one and only perfect shape to the intensity of his experiences, it was always the same struggle, "always the same Man, the son of Man, the Eternal, our Son, our God reborn. With each return he reveals himself a little more fully, and more enriched by the universe."[2] Each one of them a creator of myths, unsurpassable and inimitable. And yet the mountain was still towering above them, unexplored and unconquered. Only an occasional glimpse of the plains beyond, in *The Death of Ivan Ilytch*, in the *Appassionata*, in the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. And Rolland turns towards a different medium of integrating reality ; no longer the word, the sound, or the colour, but the mind of man itself. In one of his early plays (1917), he creates a character, Saint Louis, half fictitious, half historical, who for the first time approaches the "ideal," the great and unique synthesis, which none of the three artists could achieve. Saint Louis is certainly no artist, no dreamer of dreams. His medium is faith, and his defeat on earth is his victory in the realm of the spirit :—

His leading quality is gentleness, but he has so much of it that the strong grow weak before him ; he has nothing but his faith, but this faith builds mountains of action. He neither can nor will lead his people to victory ; but he makes his subjects transcend themselves, transcend their inertia and the apparently futile venture of the crusade, to attain faith. Thereby he gives the

[1] Romain Rolland in a letter to Dilip Kumar Roy, October 1924 ; published in *Anami*.
[2] Romain Rolland : *The Life of Ramakrishna*, 1931, pp. 12-13.

whole nation the greatness which springs from self-sacrifice. In Saint Louis, Rolland for the first time presents his favourite type, that of the vanquished victor. The king never reaches his goal,—the more he seems to be crushed by things, the more does he dominate them.[1]

Indeed we wonder whether Rolland remembered his Saint Louis when, five years later, he began his book on Mahatma Gandhi.

The clue to a proper understanding of Rolland's Indian experience lies in his early attempts at finding a new frame of reference in the lives of great men. The step from Tolstoy to Mahatma Gandhi, from Beethoven to Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, is indeed much shorter than many people seem to believe. Already in his early book on Tolstoy, published in 1911, references to India can be found, and once even a comparison between Tolstoy's inherent dualism and the Hindu synthesis of thought and action :—

> But as he (Tolstoy) was no Indian mystic, for whom extasis is sufficient, as in him intermingled the dreams of the Asiatic with the Westerner's mania for reason and his need for action, he had to translate his revelation into practical faith and to deduce from this divine life rules for his day-to-day existence.[2]

This seemed to Rolland the ultimate problem all through his life. And nothing pained him more than Tolstoy's inability to live up to his faith. Rolland's early and unbounded admiration for Tolstoy was responsible for his first great disillusionment with the West ; but it was also the first stepping-stone leading across the mountains to the plains beyond : " But I must say nevertheless that Tolstoy is a bad guide. His tormented genius has always been incapable of finding a practical way out."[3] And when one year later his book on Mahatma Gandhi appeared, he found that " everything in Gandhi is natural, simple, modest, and pure : whereas in Tolstoy, pride fights against pride, anger against anger, everything is violent, not excepting even non-violence."[4]

It was during the last war—the period of greatest disillusionment in Rolland's life—that his Indian experience took a more definite shape. In neutral Switzerland many men of intellect, free-thinkers, revolutionaries, social reformers, used to meet. We do not know whether Rolland met any Indian there, either before or during the war. But in the course of conversations with friends India and the East were mentioned more than once. Tagore had delivered his lectures on Nationalism in Japan. Rolland read them, translated extracts from them, and printed them at the end of one of his own books.[5] Neither the war

[1] Quoted in Stefan Zweig's *Romain Rolland, The Man and His Work*, p. 81.
[2] Romain Rolland : *Life of Tolstoy*.
[3] Letter to Dilip Kumar Roy, March 1922, published in *Anami*.
[4] Romain Rolland : *Mahatma Gandhi*, Madras, 1923.
[5] See " *Aux peuples assassines*," first published in *Demain*, No. 11/12, Nov./Dec. 1916.

nor the peace brought a final solution to the tortured European soul. The alternative between East and West became in the eyes of Rolland the choice between two diametrically opposed attitudes to life. And already in 1918 he writes :—

Out of this battle of the nations two colossal powers will emerge, one facing the other : America and Asia. Europe will be engulfed by either of them.... I am no prophet and nobody can say which of the two currents will engulf Europe. But I believe that the salvation of humanity, the hope of its future unity resides in the latter.[1]

Rolland is even more definite in his Preface to the French translation of Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India*. Speaking of "the spiritual tide rising from the East," he concludes : "This tide will not recede until it has covered the shores of Europe." Again and again, after the last war, Rolland makes the same kind of statement. His disillusionment with the West is boundless, and so is his hope for some light from the East :—

We are a certain number of people in Europe who are no longer satisfied with European civilization....There are among us some who look towards Asia....I do not suggest to Europeans to adopt an Asiatic faith. I only want them to taste of the blessing of this magic rhythm, this large and slow breath. They will learn there what the soul of Europe (and America) is most in need of : quietness, patience, virile hope, serene joy.[2]

The evolution of Rolland's Indian experience is also his own personal evolution from the artistic impulse considered as the most vital factor in human life to Faith in its most spiritual expression ; it is his own personal development starting from Tolstoy, Beethoven, and Michelangelo, and ending in Mahatma Gandhi, Ramakrishna, and Vivekananda. And each one of the biographies he wrote was indeed part of his own autobiography. Does he not admit it himself at the beginning of his book on Ramakrishna ?

Neither Shakespeare nor Beethoven nor Tolstoy nor Rome, the masters that nurtured me, ever revealed anything to me except the "Open Sesame" of my subterranean city.[3]

But the standards by which human greatness is measured are the same everywhere. Again and again Rolland comes across similarities in the struggle for self-realization, and his comparisons between Occidental artists and Oriental religious leaders are intensely illuminating. For the dualism of the European "tragic hero" is resolved in the Indian saint. What neither language, nor music, nor painting could do, was fulfilled by Faith. A new frame of reference had been discovered. Once again reality could be integrated :—

But he (Ramakrishna) had realised

[1] Open letter published in *Avanti*, Oct. 1918 ; quoted in P. J. Jouve : *Romain Rolland Vivant*. 1921. (Translated by the author.)

[2] Preface to the translation of Coomaraswamy's *Dance of Siva*. (Translated by the author.)

[3] Romain Rolland : *The Life of Ramakrishna*, 1931, p. 11.

cosmic joy more fully than our tragic heroes. Joy appeared to Beethoven only as a gleam of blue through the chaos of conflicting clouds, while the Paramahamsa—the Indian swan—rested his great white wings on the sapphire lake of eternity beyond the veil of tumultuous days....It was not given to his proudest disciples to emulate him. The greatest of them, the spirit with the widest wings—Vivekananda—could only attain his heights by sudden flights amid tempests which remind me over and over again of Beethoven.[1]

Romain Rolland spent the last few years writing a new book on Beethoven. Significantly enough, this book is in the main an analysis of some of Beethoven's last works, those in which he attained the very highest and probably the most abstract form of self-expression. Beethoven's complete deafness at that time led him to a degree of non-attachment to the things of this earth very rarely achieved by any Western artist. Has Rolland realised the ultimate similarity of the process of creation in the East and in the West? Did he reach the shores of that immense ocean into which all rivers flow? And did he find in those abstract and yet intensely simplified sound-structures of Beethoven's last quartettes the collective and anonymous voice of the uncounted millions who, in the East as well as in the West, long for the ultimate knowledge of freedom? We are inclined to believe it. For, like all human experiences, Rolland's Indian experience led him back to where he began. Only the angle of vision, the application of values, the level of experience, have shifted. And we would like to think that his last book will be a synthesis of the two contradictory elements that had given shape to his life: contemplation and action made one again, and a new and stronger faith born out of the never-ending wonder of creation.

A. Aronson

CIVILISATION

H. Hamilton Fyfe asks in the quarterly *Hibbert Journal* for October 1943 "Civilisation—Benefit or Curse?" The argument results in a draw—civilisation can be either, depending on the use made of it. But the analysis is on the whole unflattering to civilisation and a vigorous repudiation of its spread by force. Every civilisation of the past, he declares (though surely he should except India), "has killed itself. They all produced, in the striking phrase of Dr. W. J. Perry, a toxin which proved fatal to them."

Civilisation in essence, declares Mr. Fyfe, is "being civil—friendly, helpful, tolerant, doing to others as we would they should do to us." Motor-cars, aircraft, telephone, radio, electric light, the cinema are but "the trappings and the suits of civilisation." They do not make us civilised.

"Each civilisation in turn has gone through much the same phases," he declares, "and these phases have been intensified by the growth of cities." The more cities, the greater the inequalities of wealth and the increase of charity which, Mr. Fyfe agrees with Emerson, ought not to be required. "Man is the only animal to thrust his fellow-creatures into indigence and then claim credit for saving them from starvation." It is under civilisation that these inequities and sufferings abound,

> yet both religious and political leaders have joined with commercial adventurers in the pretence that it is good and useful to take civilisation to the uncivilised.

[1] Romain Rolland: *The Life of Vivekananda*, 1931, p. 4.

SPIRITUAL CURIOSITY

[**Shri J. M. Ganguli** rightly regards the modern absorption in the things of sense as a step backward from the once more common preoccupation with things of the spirit. Birth and death—what are the realities behind these phenomena? Prayer—what are its nature and its functions? The ancient scriptures might supply the answers, but on condition of the right approach. Let seekers put their questions to the *Gita* and the Upanishads, the *Koran* and Sufi poetry, the *Bible* and the Kabalah, not as religious scriptures to be read but as books of science to be studied and they will see what light their pages throw on life.—Ed.]

A soul comes and makes its exit; wherefrom it comes and whither it goes few care to know. Its advent is welcomed, its exit is mourned for a time: and thereafter it is forgotten. Its activities in the short span of its manifested existence are apparently of little lasting significance. Even if it did some great things, which caught the public imagination, these scarcely seem to leave behind, beyond a reference to them in the history books, results and impressions which endure through time. All its acts fade out; at a shorter or a longer distance on the horizon of time they pass into oblivion.

Is that, then, all that the soul manifests itself for? Is it for such naught-doing that it comes from a region unknown and mysterious and disappears into the same again? What is that elusive thing itself, which plays its game so mysteriously for a time, without letting the senses perceive it, the imagination penetrate it or the reason explain and divulge it? Such provoking questions are left unanswered by people when they go to console the bereaved at moments of a break in the equilibrium of living and they remain unpursued in the lulls of deceptive tranquillity.

Human culture is advancing, one reads and is told. But are not the urge to follow the unknown, and curiosity to know the mysterious, the natural characteristics of culture? If with culture intellect develops, inquisitiveness should also become keener and subtler. The test of its subtlety and keenness must obviously be in the objects which excite it and which it pursues. In that test how miserably is found to fail the modern Western culture, which is spreading over other parts of the world displacing many better native ideals and institutions. Civilized men's curiosity and interest are very generally confined to the more material and the physical. It is only these which appear to them of useful significance. It is these only which activate them, which set their minds to working, which excite their curiosity, hold their imagination and bring their skill and ingenuity into play.

Things in one form have been turned into another ; they have been combined and arranged in many ways for the sake of newness ; colours have been juxtaposed and contrasted to produce attractiveness ; and this jumbling, superposing, topsyturvying of things, has been called art. The measure of one's culture and intellectual development is supposed to lie in the measure of one's art sense, by which the beauty in the above is appreciated. True, appreciation of beauty therein, and in other things as well, requires æsthetic culture and development of the intellect ; but how very poor and limited that culture and development must be when they give us the perception of only the thin material surface of things and nothing of the vast, underlying, immaterial spirit that gives the consciousness which perceives matter and appreciates the beauty which, in different forms, natural and artificial, matter presents !

Judged from that stand-point, does it appear that human culture, by which is generally meant today the ways of living and thinking in Europe and America, is advancing ? In olden days, before the advent of the present culture, there was more sense of the dissatisfying incompleteness of life than there seems to be in the men of education and culture today. And that consciousness and realization much affected their life and their thoughts. In worshipping Nature ; in deifying idols ; in sanctifying altars and temples ; in praying to the Sun, the Moon and the stars above ; in shedding tears before symbols ; in referring doubts, fears, sorrows and disappointments, as also desires and longings, to a Being mysterious and unknown, they only gave vent to the feelings of a soul that felt an inward urge to sense and to commune with the Missing Link in the chain of its thoughts and reasoning, with the Essential Unit needed to fill the void in its experience and existence. People then ate, moved, laughed and lived like the " civilized people " of today, but that inward urge in them, conscious and subconscious, that feeling of the unreality and evanescence of things appertaining to matter, that sensing of Something Incomprehensible standing beyond Matter, made them pour out their emotions of joy and sorrow, of love and devotion to the personified and deified idol, stone, tree or cross. The civilized men of today deride what they call the silly superstition of their predecessors and remain self-contained and self-satisfied in their daily work and pleasure.

Does not comparison between the two show subtlety of perception and keenness of intellect in those who cannot free their minds from the yearning for something worth knowing ; and bluntness and crudeness in those others who do not feel the urge to know, to go beyond the hazy limits of their poor imagination and the narrow boundary of boastful reasoning ? The unsatisfied burning curiosity to pursue

and to know the vital, Lasting Thing, which impelled the former to seek it in the wonders and the mysteries of Nature and in the novelty and strangeness of their unexplained experiences, and which drove the more intense and eager among them to renounce the world with its attractions and to sit with closed eyes in rapt meditation beside a lonely rock or inside a dark cave, does not worry the moderner, who considers such meditation idle and such renunciation unprofitable. His mind distracted by the surrounding environment and his thoughts preoccupied with the interests of his fleshly self, he dismisses spiritual curiosity, if it ever awakens, by calling that idle thinking and an unprofitable pursuit, or even by denying the possibility of the existence of anything spiritual and immaterial. "If there be a God, He must be a perfect mathematician," says the scientist-astronomer, and there he stops and turns back to his telescope and to the things that matter to him. The study of mathematics is of interest to him, but not the finding out of the Mathematician. It is more or less the same with all the moderns,—scholars, professionals or money-making traders. The following of trends of knowledge from the limited sense-experienced world into the realm of the Unknown and the Mysterious has not for them the exciting interest that could stir them from the stupor of their day-to-day life which remains absorbed in sense enjoyments and in labouring for the means for securing such enjoyments.

Can such a condition of stupor; can the mind that roams in dull satisfaction within the limits of crude sense experience and enjoyments; can the want of sustained interest in the pursuit of Truth, of the Absolute, the Spiritual and the Mysterious, can these which are the common features of civilized life today be signs of progressive culture, of keenness of intellect, of evolving civilization? Mere material and industrial progress, the rising standard of living and the increasing complexity of work and engagements which are taken as the measure of culture, are rather things which turn back imagination from its upward flight and keep the mind forgetful of the spiritual Self and absorbed in the littleness and unreality of surrounding matter. That men do not realize that and show no dissatisfaction with leaving unriddled the Spiritual Mystery is more an indication of intellectual dullness and cultural retrogression than of progress from the time when so many felt so unsatisfied with the unlasting and insignificant things of matter that they renounced the world, simplified their life to barest existence and retired to forest and mountain fastnesses, determined to seek out in meditation the deeply Hidden Spirit.

J. M. GANGULI

REFLECTION AT EVENTIDE

[Quiet and reflective, the American writer, **Merton S. Yewdale**, brings home here a truth too often obscured by the pseudo-scientific inhibition that Nature is something objective and distinct from ourselves. To the perceiving mind She is "a great unity of which we are an essential part." The recurrence of natural phenomena like day and night, the march of the seasons, and, on the plane of human life, birth, growth, death and life again are but expressions of an invariable cosmic rhythm that works under unfailing universal law.—ED.]

It is evening. The sun is slowly sinking behind the horizon, and shadows are gathering under the great trees that surround the house. The noises of the day are subsiding, and silence is beginning to creep around. Outside my study window, a robin is splashing in the bird-bath. In a corner of the garden, a wild brown rabbit is sitting near the trellis nibbling leaves. A gray squirrel with a nut in his mouth is hurrying across the lawn. On the branch of a giant willow near-by, a thrush is singing: "*Éeooleelée—ée-ee-oo—Éeooleelée—ée-ee-oo.*" From a distant church comes the sound of the evening bell. The day is done, and the night is drawing near, when everything will be asleep and the visible world will be dissolved in the darkness. Such is the unceasing drama of the day and the night.

There is an Eternal Rhythm, which is before all else and to which everything is subject. It expresses itself in a never-ending cycle of alternating periods of manifestation and non-manifestation, both cosmic and earthly. By it, all things in the universe, as well as the universe itself, periodically come into existence, live out their appointed time, and then return to the place of stillness whence they came, there to remain in slumber until the time for their reappearance. Of this endless evolution and involution, day and night are the ever-present symbol and model, whether it be the earthly day and night of twelve hours each, or the Day and Night of Brahmā of a thousand ages each. In the words of the *Bhagavad Gîta,*

> Those who know the Day of Brahma, a thousand ages (Yugas) in duration, and the Night, a thousand ages in ending, they are the knowers of day and night. At the coming of the Day all manifestations are born into being out of the unmanifest, at the coming of the Night all vanish or are dissolved in it. This multitude of existences helplessly comes into becoming again and again, is dissolved at the Night...and is born into being at the coming of the Day.

In earth life, we arbitrarily divide time into past, present, and future. But when we refrain from consciously thinking about it, the three periods dissolve into an eternal present. Indeed, the universe is a vast panorama of the eternal present: the part of the universe we have already experienced, we call

the past; the part we are still experiencing, we call the present; the part we have not yet experienced, we call the future. It is the sum total of man's memory of the past, his awareness of the present, and his vision of the future, that constitutes the eternal present. It is the ceaseless action of the Eternal Rhythm, in its evolutionary and involutionary movement, that constitutes Eternity.

Lâo Tsze, the great Chinese metaphysician, wrote in his *Tâo Teh King* of the Law of Ever-Recurring Life :—

Amid the supreme peace,
In the Great Void,
All things blossom in harmony,
And their cycle of activities is discernible.

After they have completed their luxuriant growth,
They return to their Primal Source.
The return to their Primal Source is called attainment of Peace.
This peace is the law of ever-recurring life.
The progression of ever-recurring life is called Eternity.

There are two ways in which we regard Nature. If we view her with our rational mind, she stands off from us, and, as a world of interrelated parts, forces and laws, offers herself to us for objective study and practical use. But if we view her with our intuitive mind, she presents herself to us as a great unity, of which we are an essential part; and also as an eternal vision of loveliness, which is a delight to our senses and a therapeutic means of alleviating our pains and lightening our burdens.

In his chief work, *The World as Will and Idea*, Schopenhauer, the famous German philosopher, in commenting upon the calmness and the relief derived from a contemplation of the beauty of Nature, wrote :—

Whenever it discloses itself suddenly to our view, it almost always succeeds in delivering us, though it may be only for a moment, from subjectivity, from the slavery of the will, and in raising us to the state of pure knowing. This is why the man who is tormented by passion, or want, or care, is so suddenly revived, cheered and restored by a single free glance into Nature: the storm of passion, the pressure of desire and fear, and all the miseries of willing are then at once, and in a marvellous manner, calmed and appeased.

Expressed in terms of Oriental philosophy, when we gaze upon natural beauty, the self, which is the root of all human trouble, is silenced for the time being, and we partake of the restfulness of the Divine Self, of which Nature is the visible earthly appearance.

A view of still waters is particularly soothing. In fact, there is a marked similarity between water and the mind. Both are quiet when they are in their natural state. The water, when it is churned up by wind and storm, or by submarine upheaval, waits but for the moment when the causes of its disturbance are removed, so that it can return to its peaceful level. In like manner, the mind, when it is agitated by outer hostile forces or by inner

conflicts, waits also for the moment when the disturbing influences are withdrawn, so that it, too, can recover its accustomed quietude.

In a similar vein, when the day is sunshiny and the wind quiet, and the surface of the water is smooth like a sheet of glass, we can see reflected in it the sun, the clouds, the birds flying overhead, the boats on its surface, the overhanging trees and shrubs on the shore and other objects near the water's edge. Also, when we look down through the shining surface we can see, in the transparent depths, the fishes, the rocks, the vegetation, the shells, and other forms of marine life. But when the day is dark and the wind has ruffled the surface of the water, nothing can be reflected in it and nothing can be discerned in its clouded depths.

Likewise, when the mind is composed, it is like a two-sided mirror—one side reflecting the visible physical world, the other reflecting the invisible spiritual world. But when the mind is harassed by trouble and worry, the mirrors become clouded and nothing can be seen in them. It is only by being one with the Divine Self, that man can achieve an unclouded mind; and it is alone by his unclouded mind that he can envisage the eternal truths of the physical and the spiritual world.

It is faith, not belief, that makes clear the mind and gives it ease, confidence and poise. Faith is instinct manifested in the heart, and it often remains even when the objects upon which it is centred have become changed; for faith is greater than the objects of its gifts. Faith is a spiritual principle—dynamic and expanding. Belief, on the other hand, is instinct manifested in the intellect, and may become weakened or shattered when the reasons upon which it is based appear no longer to be valid. Belief is eclectic rule—static and restricting; and it now and then degenerates into mere opinion, which is but an expression of surface observation and a reflection of personal inclination. It is by faith alone that the great inevitable human works of the world are produced, for faith is universal and timeless.

As we survey the progress which the human race has made through the ages, it is plain that, from an ethical point of view, man has advanced individually much more than he has collectively. Indeed, it is a question whether collectively he has made much of an advance at all.

For example, there was once a time when it was the custom for men to bear arms on all occasions; when duelling was permitted and when it was considered both legal and honourable to kill an opponent in a private quarrel. Today, only properly delegated persons may have deadly weapons in their possession; duelling is forbidden by law and the man who kills another in a personal encounter is adjudged neither honourable nor courageous, but, on the contrary, is considered guilty of

murder.

But whereas duelling has been outlawed, war is still accepted as a legitimate means of settling disputes. It is constantly urged by many persons that war has always been in the world and always will be. Nevertheless, the practice of killing men in private duels has been abandoned, and it is equally possible and likely that the practice of killing men in public wars will also be eventually abandoned. And this may come at a time not far distant; for the present-day world has almost reached its capacity to digest any more war. A new dispensation is in the offing.

When that time arrives, the race of men generally will regard war as the lowest form of endeavour for resolving human difficulties. Likewise, it will be a mark of courage and of honour to refuse to shed the blood of one's fellow-beings. In fact, they who refrain from war will be the only truly free men, and they who yield to the call of leaders bent upon conflict will become outlaws from the free society of the world.

The present epoch, like the day that is almost spent, is drawing to a close. We must live through it and see it to its end. Some day we shall look back upon it; and it will seem like a frightful dream. Or, in a more rational mood, it will present the picture of a world struggling in its last mortal illness.

In this titanic war, many human beings are passing from the earthly scene, and many more are crying out, as did the Psalmist many centuries ago, in similar plight:—

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Yet it is again only the symbol of day and night: after the light of day comes the darkness of night, and after the darkness of night comes the light of day. Those who have fallen in the war have but gone from day to night, and at their appointed time they will come again into day. In the immortal words of Krishna,

It is not true that at any time I was not, nor thou, nor these kings of men; nor is it true that any of us shall cease to be hereafter. As the soul passes physically through childhood and youth and age, so it passes on to the changing of the body....Know that to be imperishable by which all this is extended. Who can slay the immortal spirit? Finite bodies have an end, but that which possesses and uses the body, is infinite, illimitable, eternal and indestructible...it is not slain with the body.

In the Eternal Present there is neither life nor death, only sleeping and waking—and the new day is ever the promise of better things. The light of the sun by day is the symbol of that greater Light which knows neither day nor night, and which ever shines in the heart and the mind of man, to guide him in his sojourn on this earth.

MERTON S. YEWDALE

A LEAF FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ARYAN

[**Gurdial Mallik** has been a very familiar figure for many years at Santiniketan where, beloved by colleagues and pupils alike, he has served the cause of Indian education in a noble and efficient way. In this "leaf" we come upon the source of his influence which has made him so attractive a figure to his many friends.—ED.]

It is said that on one occasion Kabir was asked by an aspirant after the spiritual life to state the precise hour when he was initiated into the mystery and majesty of Truth. He replied that this happiness had been bestowed on him before Brahma, the Creator, "had put on the cap and clothes of form."

Likewise, it will not be an extravagance to say that the soul of man was christened as "Aryan" prior to its being given the garment of the flesh. But this title to nobility has to be proved in the long course of human evolution. For, if "Nature," as the poet says, "is the garment of God," so must the body of man become the transparent-walled temple of the Divine.

When exactly, however, the wings of the bird of the soul are first a-flutter in the cage of the finite no one can tell. This will ever remain a mystery. But all the same we grow increasingly aware of the "flutter," which is nothing more than the longing and love of the bird for the sky which it glimpses, as now and again the door of the cage stands ajar.

This opening of the door happens in the life of everyone; of course not simultaneously, but at different moments of the clock of eternity. Today, looking back over my present physical incarnation, I find I can locate the several milestones on the path of my spiritual unfoldment.

When I was about twenty-seven, I had a vision, which made me conscious, in a categorical and conclusive manner, of a Presence and a Power other than ourselves. I sat all alone one day at noon in a secluded spot, not far from a forest hermitage, when suddenly I "saw" a Being, whose stature stretched from the sod to the sky. He looked like a veritable pillar of light, and from him radiated forth a perfume, the strength and the sweetness of which were surcharged with the electricity of ecstasy. The vision lasted hardly for the twinkling of an eye. And no sooner had it departed than I burst forth into a song. (This was, by-the-by, the first time in my present life that a song, complete with text and tune, "came out" of my heart and lips.) Just for a while in the beginning I seemed to hear "unstruck music" being sounded in ether and then I, as it were,

"recollected" it and sang it with the spontaneity of the Shelleyan skylark. The words were in Hindi; translated into English they would run:—

I slept in the shadow of the wall of my house when thou, O lord of my life, camest to the door.

Woe betide me, I did not waken and so, finding the door closed, thou wentest back.

When at last I opened my eyes I heard the sound of thy departing footsteps. It was then that I realized with a pang in my heart that thou hadst come to the door.

I continued singing for hour upon hour, to the tune of tears of pleasing pain, oblivious of the world around me as well as of my daily duties. And even after I stopped singing at midnight, joy still tingled in my blood. The benediction of the Presence I had seen, however, sustained me through a number of bereavements,—the loss by death of a very dear friend, the loss of what limited financial resources I had, and other similar deprivations which followed in quick succession. I had all along a very strong feeling that the pond of my personality had opened itself out to an inlet and an influx from the Ocean of the Oversoul.

The second "milestone" on the path of my spiritual unfoldment was gained nearly seven years afterwards. In the small hours of the morning, one day I was walking along the sea-beach. Suddenly my heart began to beat in unison with the rhythm of the waves. I was filled with ineffable joy. The spell was short-lived, but its memory has remained with me till this day, enshrined in a couple of songs:—

Who came to my door at dawn?

The night had just ended when someone knocked at my door and I asked, "Who is there?"

He answered, "It is I, who have come today to you as your guest. How will you entertain me?"

And I blushed with shame.

In the wake of the first song came another:—

The Beloved has come to my courtyard.

Leaving His palace, He has pitched His tent in my courtyard.

He is a master-musician; He has come to listen to my song.

He is an exquisite artist; He has come to look at my picture.

The feelings of vital delight which surged up with the songs, I need not say, lifted me into a radiant region of my being, of which I had had a vision, or of which I had heard rumours occasionally. And even later on when I returned to the workaday world with its dust and din, I felt like the pilgrim who has just had a bath in the Ganges and is still experiencing the purity and the profound peace of the sacred river.

Another cycle of seven years supervened. Then once I lay at

death's door. A serious malady had seized me. The doctors had despaired of my life. All of a sudden, from somewhere, Breath was wafted towards me and I began to sing, while those who surrounded my bed stood in fear of the physical collapse any moment. Some of them actually begged of me, with tears in their eyes, not to strain myself. But the current of song carried me along :—

O Divine Dyer, have compassion on me and dye my garment.

I have dyed it again and again, but, alas, the colour has always come out.

Thou art a skilful dyer and all thy colours are fast.

I like the kingly ochre colour best of all.

O Divine Dyer, dye thou, then, my garment in ochre.

When the song was over I felt like a new man. The doctors exclaimed in joy, "The crisis is past. God be praised!" What shall I say of my subsequent reactions to the song? Cumulatively they underlined my idealism and my activities thereafter with a deeper sense of renunciation—"of enjoyment of the world." as the *Isopanishad* says, "by renunciation." Thus had the third "milestone" been revealed to me.

The fourth "milestone" was reached about five years afterwards. I was in the train. The compartment in which I was seated was filled to suffocation with fellow-passengers. Physically, therefore, I was at a low ebb. And yet, in the midst of the press and push of the crowd, the skylark of my soul started singing :—

Today the Beloved has come to thy house; fulfil thou His heart's longing.

He has come with the gift of His love, which He has carried for thee age after age.

Launch out thy boat of life, then, with Him as its helmsman. In sunshine and in shadow, in rain and in thunder, He will be thy guide.

Today the Beloved has come to thy house ; fulfil thou His heart's longing.

At once the compartment was converted into a garden, rioting with the perfume of the rose. There was complete silence. The elbowing and the abusing had ceased. Everyone sat listening intently to the song.

Such has been the "song-way" of my life of the spirit. The "musical milestones" have been more than mere snatches of melody. They have endowed my work and my worship with significance and with what, for lack of an apter phrase, may be called "the singing quality." An expansiveness of the heart has been the net result. The songs have built up for me with effortless ease a kind of Jacob's ladder between earth and heaven, along which He comes down to the door of my consciousness and I go up into His perfumed Presence. They have provided me with "golden hours," which, in terms of wealth, have outstripped that of Crœsus and of Midas. The air of blessedness has blown through my house of clay, littered with worldly trinkets and tinsel. It has flung open many a window in the mansion of the mind, uncovering to my view the One-in-All and the All-in-One.

I have told my tale truthfully. But what has been told is but the beginning. For, who can Canute-wise say to the ever-flowing Spirit, "So far and no further"?

GURDIAL MALLIK

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM*

This book sets forth the central teachings of Hinduism and early Buddhism with a view to indicating the exact relation between them. It is divided into two parts, each devoted to one of these religions. The first part begins by referring to current misconceptions about Hinduism and then recounts the creation myth as recorded in early Hindu literature. The meaning of the myth, in all the diverse forms in which it appears, is the unity and spiritual character of the source from which the world of variety emerges. That world, when it has emerged, does not however stand apart from the source, but is pervaded through and through by it. As a consequence, the unitary spirit is differentiated or broken up, as it were, into a plurality of empirical selves. Although the one thus lapses into the many, it is not lost but only remains hidden by them. It accordingly comes to have two forms—one proximate and the other ultimate. But they are really one; and it is their essential identity that is the meaning of the Upanishadic saying, "That thou art." The final goal of man consists in the realisation of this identity, or the regaining by the individuated self of its true and original character from which it has lapsed.

The rest of this part of the book describes the *sadhana* or the course of discipline to be followed for the achievement of this ideal. There are two distinct stages of it. The first is one of *karma* or of active life. In describing it, the author explains very well the original significance of sacrifice and shows how, through gradual sublimation, this ritualistic conception came to stand for the detached performance, as taught in the *Gita*, of one's duties, whatever they may be. But this training in disinterested action does not lead to the goal by itself; it only qualifies for entering upon the higher and final stage of the discipline for reaching it through right knowledge. In explaining this ideal, Dr. Coomaraswamy brings out clearly the exalted character of the "anonymous life" of a *jivanmukta* who voluntarily relinquishes everything; and represents it as the quintessence of the Hindu social order. The mere presence of such men in society, he says, is enough to change its whole attitude towards the values of life.

The second part, treating of early Buddhism, also opens with some general remarks. It then narrates the ever-entrancing story of Buddha—first as a royal prince, then as an ascetic striving for spiritual illumination and lastly as a teacher of mankind. His teaching was represented, till a decade or two ago, as a deliberate reform of Hinduism and a protest against its rigid social distinctions. That view has ceased to prevail now; and the one which has largely replaced it is that early Buddhism was an expansion within, and

* *Hinduism and Buddhism.* By ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY. (Philosophical Library, New York. $1.75)

not against, Hinduism. Doubtless there are divergences between the two; but in them Buddhism sides, for the most part, with Upanishadic teaching as distinguished from the earlier ritualism of the Brahmanas. Dr. Coomaraswamy subscribes to the essentials, though not to every detail, of this new view. "The more profound our study," he writes, "the more difficult it becomes to distinguish the two religions"; and his exposition fully bears out this intimate kinship between them. For instance, earlier interpreters thought that Buddha denied the soul or ego, explaining it as a mere aggregate of certain factors none of which had any permanence. It is shown here clearly that its repudiation was no part of the original teaching of Buddhism. When the Buddhistic scriptures speak of the soul as a composite of fleeting elements, they refer only to man's empirical personality, and not to the subsistent Self immanent in all beings which, like Hinduism, early Buddhism also recognised and to which it sometimes even applied the Upanishadic term, Brahman. The ultimate aim of life is to grow into this Self, so *nirvana* means not annihilation, as it was once misconceived, but the realisation of the divinity which is latent in oneself.

From a note at the end, the book seems to consist of certain lectures delivered by the author. It is replete with useful and interesting information; but the treatment is too brief, considering the nature of the subject. The reader is therefore likely to feel the need for further explanation, particularly where parallels are cited from religious and philosophic doctrines other than Indian. The author is not unaware of this shortcoming, for the profuse notes which are appended to each of the two parts, he says, are meant "to assist the reader to build up a meaning content for several terms that could not be fully explained in the lectures as delivered." These notes are drawn from a very wide field of study, and will be of great value to students not only of early Indian thought but also of comparative religion.

M. HIRIYANNA

The Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. (Swami Pavitrananda, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas. Rs. 4/-)

The primary interest of this collection of sketches of lives touched directly by Sri Ramakrishna is naturally for his followers. But it is valuable also as a laboratory study in comparative religion, for, in the features common to practically all these short biographies, the strength—and the weakness—of *Bhakti-Yoga* stand clearly revealed.

Nowhere perhaps is the preoccupation with God-realisation so intense and so contagious as in India. The ancient Sages proclaimed a God without attributes, unchangeable, unthinkable. But, as in Krishna's day, for "those whose hearts are fixed on the unmanifested the labour is greater"; the yearning for a tangible object of devotion is strong. And so forces of Nature may be reverenced under the aspect of particular deities; their images may be worshipped; or the chosen Guru, as in the case of Ramakrishna, may be regarded as a divine incarnation. Certainly the power to transform men's lives was Shri Ramakrishna's in a marked degree. The most sceptical must recognise the working in these men and women of a force unaccountable on materialistic lines.

E. M. H.

THE ROAD TO HEL *

This brilliant study of some hitherto unexplored branches of Norse eschatology is the fruit of profound erudition, rare enthusiasm and tireless industry. These exceptional qualifications have enabled the authoress to undertake a first-hand examination of virtually all available sources of information in this sphere, and to interpret them with an eloquence and a lucidity in every respect worthy of the greatness of the theme. This book may indeed justly rank as a pioneer attempt to ascertain whether, in the writer's own words, "from the vast accumulation of evidence relating to the dead it is possible to make out any definite and consistent presentation of the other world, and the fate of man beyond the grave." In the course of this fascinating inquiry Miss Ellis has compressed within a comparatively small space a wealth of illustration drawn from the inexhaustible well-spring of those wonderful old Icelandic sagas, which furnished so much of the inspiration for the Wagnerian operas. This revelation of soaring imagery, poetic fancy and sombre dramatic power in endless tales of gods and heroes in a literature composed before the thirteenth century undoubtedly prompts comparison with the masterpieces of Ancient Greece. As Miss Ellis says,

> the appreciation of mighty issues in the lives of simple folk which we find in them is something as new as the perfect mastery of a narrative prose style; neither was to appear again in Europe for centuries.

In the limited space at the reviewer's disposal it would be impossible to do full justice to the impressive scope of Miss Ellis's scholarly achievement, but some idea of its main trends may perhaps be derived from a rapid survey of its subject-matter. Thus Chapter I treats of archæological evidence discernible in funeral customs, the disposal of the dead in heathen times, the funeral ship. In Chapter II we have the evidence of literature, cremation and inhumation, human sacrifice, the funeral feast. Chapter III deals with the conception of the future life exemplified in Valhöll (Valhalla), the Valkyries, the realm of the gods; the underworld realm of the dead or Hel (not Hell!) from which the book takes its title; the dead in the mountains. Chapter IV discusses the cult of the dead, the worship of the dead and of the grave-mound or howe; elves and land-spirits. In Chapter V the writer considers the conception of the soul, shape-changing, the animal *fylgja* or form closely connected with the individual; the guardian *hamingja* or *dís*, *i. e.*, a guardian spirit sometimes in the form of a huge woman clad in armour attached to a particular family; the idea of rebirth and survival. Necromancy is examined in Chapter VI. The term comprises such eerie matters as the waking of the sleeper, the animation of the dead, and the restless corpse.

Chapter VII, the last, describes the journey to the land of the dead through the wall of fire, and the entrance into the burial mound or howe. In this context, as studies in the macabre and the horrible it would be difficult to match the writer's

* *The Road to Hel: A Study of the Conception of the Dead in old Norse Literature.* By HILDA RODERICK ELLIS, M.A., PH.D. (Cambridge University Press. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

account of the ancient Scandinavian beliefs concerning the malevolent force impelling the dead to leave the grave-mound and to inflict evil upon the living, and the terrific personal combats between heroes who have broken into the howe to carry off the treasures hidden inside, and the *draugar* or dead guardians who keep jealous watch over their possessions. Here, indeed, we have a sinister phenomenon clearly differentiated from the Western belief in ghosts as the spiritual essence of the deceased, inasmuch as the Norse *draugr* was in no sense a spirit, but the bodily substance of the dead man, dreadfully reanimated with super-human strength enabling him to defend his treasures in the grave-mound or to sally forth at night to harry the living. And obviously there can be very little in common between the gruesome conception of the state of the dead thus presented and belief in the survival of the soul or spirit of man beyond the grave shared alike by Western deism and theism.

Miss Ellis herself recognizes that her conclusions cannot be free from tantalizing lacunæ which only further study of "the rich and powerful literature of old Scandinavia" can fill. Nevertheless, apart from the recognized worship of Othin (Odin) and the conception of a Valhöll (Valhalla) dependent thereon, reserved for the aristocracy, the authoress is able to show that references to some kind of under-world of the common dead are very frequent in Norse literature, although it has to be conceded that the "Norse mind was not particularly interested in the clear-cut conception of another world beyond the grave." And it is surely significant that the literature invariably emphasizes the journey to Hel, upon which the skaldic poets have lavished the apparently limitless resources of their vivid imagination, in preference to extolling the joy or anguish of an after-life.

In the masterly development of her theme and in order to reveal traces of outside influence on Norse mythology, the authoress goes as far afield as Asiatic Russia, pointing out the parallel to be observed between accounts of shamanistic ideas about the soul and the conception of the journeying of the spirit outside the body, which plays an important part in Norse literature.

It occurs to the reviewer that this admirable book would perhaps be less "caviare to the general" and might have an even wider appeal if in any subsequent edition a glossary were supplied of Icelandic words reproduced in the text. Further, would it not simplify perusal for the tyro if Icelandic proper names were wholly transliterated into Latin characters instead of retaining certain distinctive individual letters not universally familiar? In their present form their correct pronunciation is likely to baffle the uninitiated.

E. J. HARRISON

The Triumphant Spirit: A Study of Depression. By E. GRAHAM HOWE. (Faber and Faber, Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

The keystone of Dr. Howe's new book, that which holds it secure as a work of wisdom and balance, and so of urgent importance, is its essential realism. For long now (and only in slightly more marked degree since September, 1939) we have been suffering for our unbalanced and unrealistic

attitude of reliance either upon idealism dissociated from compatible practice or upon materialism dissociated from the inspiration of faith. Dr. Howe's emphasis falls upon synthesis, the synthesis of spirit-and-matter, of female-and-male, of good-and-evil. But he is careful to disabuse us of the idea that the spiritual is of necessity good, the material of necessity bad; the four elements of which we are composed—intuition, thought, feeling and action—are good or bad according as they are rightly or wrongly related and well or ill used. The importance of this book—and it cannot be over-estimated, any more than the difficulties involved for us in making its wisdom our own should be under-estimated—lies (let us repeat) in its profoundly realistic understanding of man as a creature having his head in the clouds and his feet upon solid earth while moving in a middle course through his circumstances: *medio tutissimus ibis* was Horace's summary of man's nature and his road and may be said to be Dr. Howe's also.

The book is a fitting symbol of its content: while it is in the fullest sense inspired, it is in the fullest sense practical. It is the work of a poet who is a doctor, which is to say that it is the work of a true poet and a true doctor. Its style is not its least important feature. There are those—and they will include any who have forsaken balance for either the intellectual or the mystical, the academic or the romantic emphasis—who will find this style irritating. Parable and metaphor are the language of the poet and the healer (there have been some outstanding examples), more easily apprehended by the common people, whose apparent stupidity is often their unconscious wisdom, than by the pandits. Dr. Howe's language being that of poetry, his word-play makes for significance, his use of simile for illumination. Some of our familiar words must be re-apprehended if we are to appreciate him fully, just as we must look through rather than with the eyes if we are to do justice to his diagrams and pictures. It is true that some parts of the book, particularly the later chapters, show signs of looseness, hasty writing and redundancy, but the writing of the book as a whole remains in the proper sense splendid; language is refreshed and washed clean by it, meaning made to shine.

It may easily be argued that Dr. Howe says nothing new. (What poet has ever claimed that there was anything new to say?) The content of his thought is that of Eastern philosophers, or those influenced by them, from Lao-Tse to Jung. But it is newly expressed, and expressed for the Western mentality, which is already voicing its desire to hear it by (for example) an increasing interest in Blake. The effect of the book as a whole is remarkable for its range and depth: here, if you like to see it, is a diagram of an age and a map of its road to health; here is a portrait of my neighbour which will compel my compassion for him, and a portrait of myself which I may disapprove but may not refuse to acknowledge. Indeed, the full and honest reading of this book by a man of our age requires a certain courage and there will be many ways of escape into rationalized rejection where that courage is lacking; but the reward of daring to read with a receptive mind and heart will be a high one. Where that receptivity exists, criticism is disarmed; the book merely says, and says with justification: Read; accept; and be healed.

R. H. WARD

Tomorrow. (Part 1). Edited by RAJA RAO and AHMED ALI. (Padma Publications Ltd., Sir Phirozeshah Mehta Road, Bombay. Rs. 2/8)

This volume, mostly of translations, brings together fourteen items—five stories, two pieces of literary criticism and seven poems—drawn from writers of France, Czechoslovakia, Russia, India and China. The young writer today is anxious to escape the false note which traditional writing almost invariably betrays. The best of realists selects, thus re-creates and then presents life. That a true picture of life can teach better than moralising on a false one is the new faith. If in giving this true picture, in bringing to the common man an awareness of himself, of the world and of the complex of contemporary forces, the writer finds traditional reticence an embarrassment, it is because of his earnest effort to present reality as it really is.

This is what one feels on reading Mikhail Sholokov's "Hate," S. H. Vatsyayana's "Butterflies" or Ahmed Ali's "The Prison-House." The first is a powerful narrative depicting the Nazi cruelty that provoked in the Russian fierce hatred for the foe and intense love for his own country. The other two stories present vivid pictures of suffering minds—suffering from life itself. Vilem Haas's constructive interpretation of Franz Kafka is typical for its thoroughness as the gleanings from Lu-Hsun are for their compact wisdom. The poetical part of the anthology throbs with an agonised consciousness of the present, a will and a hope that look beyond the disorder of today. Special mention, however, must be made of Evelyn Wood's impassioned "Prothalamion for India" which together with Sholokov's contribution makes the reader look forward to the second part.

V. M. INAMDAR

Religion and the Indian Problem. By SIR R. P. PARANJPYE. (C. A. Watts and Co., Ltd., London. 6*d.*)

There is nothing new in this pamphlet and very little at which intelligent Indians will not either smile or sigh wearily. All the well-worn museum pieces about the religious credulity of the Indian masses, the corruption of their priests, the evil influence of astrology, the differences between Muslims and Hindus, are brought out of their glass cases and dusted. Even lovers of fossils will wonder why these ancient Anglo-Indian relics should be exhibited once again to the British public in the year of grace 1943. The answer is quite frankly stated in the foreword:—

> ....they throw a clear light upon the obstacles to unity and independence in the Indian Empire.

They certainly throw a light upon it, somewhat blurred by the author's ingenuously Western focus.

Yet this is not to say that the pamphlet is devoid of good points. There are some illuminating observations on the elementary education of children, and some criticisms of the Hindu caste system that the unbiassed will welcome. But these are as seeds scattered among old chaff. One imagines that very few people who know India today will agree with the author's main thesis that excessive deference to authority and unreason are the chief characteristics of the Indian people!

D. G. STOLL

Isavasya-Upanishad-Bhashya. By SRI VENKATANATHA, edited by K. C. VARADACHARI and D. T. TATACHARYA. (Devasthanam Press, Tirupati. Rs. 2/-)

This fifth volume of the Sri Venkateswara Oriental Series, under the general editorship of Mr. P. V. Ramanujaswamy, contains the text of Sri Vedanta Desika's commentary (*Bhashya*) on the *Isavasya-Upanishad*, edited by Dr. Varadachari and D. T. Tatacharya with practically all the concomitants of modern critical editing. An Introduction in English which deals exhaustively with the life and work of Vedanta Desika, a comparative study of the two versions of the Upanishad itself (the *Kanva* and the *Madhyandina*), a rendering of Vedanta Desika's work in English and the identification of the citations found in Desika's work are the striking features of this research undertaking. The Sanskrit text is printed in Devanagari, explanations where required being indicated in foot-notes.

Notwithstanding the fantastic explanations given by some critics as to why Vedanta Desika should have chosen this Upanishad for especial comment, namely, that it is the *first* Upanishad (in fact, this is only the publishers' arrangement, as any Upanishad may be printed first) and that it has something to do with the horse-faced Deity (Hayagriva, whose favourite Desika was) and so forth, the nearest approach to a correct conjecture seems to be that the *Isavasya* is a compact Upanishad which prominently emphasizes the theistic truth of God as the Indweller of the Cosmos (*Isavasya*); that is perhaps why it was singled out by Desika. The nature of the cosmic Indweller, significant details of a dedicated approach to that Indweller as the only means of self-realization or realization of the *summum bonum* of existence, and connected matters are the contents of the Upanishad.

The Editors remark that, *excluding Venkatanatha*, most commentators have not contributed anything original by way of interpreting the Upanishad and that they alternate between "Sankara and Uvvata" but, in fact, it is difficult to see in what respects precisely Venkatanatha himself has attempted interpretations not attempted by any of his predecessors. It is claimed that loyalty to "textual unity, to tradition, and to rules of interpretation," is the most prominent characteristic of Vedanta Desika's work, but it must be remembered that a claim like this has been urged passionately and zealously on behalf of almost all classical writers like Vedanta Desika.

If, in this short Upanishad, Vedanta Desika had a context demanding originality of interpretation it lies in Stanza 16. (*Pooshan-sohamasmi.*) No use endeavouring to dispose of this stanza, which is brimful of monistic (advaitic) implications, as dealing with the so-called *Aham-graha-upasana* and quoting irrelevantly the view of Madhva, as some have done. Vedanta Desika's criticism of "Advaita" in this context is of the usual stereotyped species. That cannot be helped. Originality of interpretation *per se* does not indicate philosophic gain or soundness. The matter cannot be allowed to rest with a mere repetition of the catchword *Aham-graha-upasana*. The question should be asked why, in avowedly non-advaitic or non-monistic systems of thought, a form of worship is advocated the essence of which is contemplation of oneness or identity between the finite worshipper and the Infinite Immanent in the Solar Orb or Disc, when this very identity is vehemently denounced as a doctrine.

The Editors have rightly mentioned prominently that Vedanta Desika's striking contribution consists in his philosophical and practical emphasis on the organistic conception of Visishtadvaita, and the realistic logic through the instrumentality of which that system has been constructed, the main *pramana* being of course *Sruti*, as in all Vedantic schools. In this connection, there is no use whatever in blaming "inductive logic" as incapable of

overstepping "its own shadow or presuppositions." For, in the unquestioning acceptance of the validity of the Scripture (*Sruti*) all Vedantic systems have their permanent postulate or presupposition from the "shadow" of which they can never hope to escape!

In common with other theistic thinkers and metaphysical masterminds, Vedanta Desika has placed at the centre or focus of philosophical or spiritual consciousness the *fact* that the Supreme Lord should be viewed and understood as an Immanent Indweller of the cosmos. If realized in all its implications and significance, the fact would enable an aspirant to see and study the world and its transactions in an altogether new perspective. How far and to what extent this Indwelling of the entire cosmos by the Supreme Lord is philosophically consistent with the annoying and frightfully embarrassing presence of Evil in *the very cosmos* so *indwelt* by the Supreme Lord is a problem of metaphysics to which evidently the Lord Himself does not want man to find a solution! Perhaps it is the fruit of the forbidden tree. While congratulating the Editors on their excellent edition, let me point out that Citation No. 3, *"Paramatmaniyo-rakto-virakto-a-paramatmani"* noted as "unidentified" occurs in *Naradaparivrajakopanishad* (p. 264, Bombay Ed., No. 18). I owe this identification to Srimathi M. A. Ruckmini, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Madras.

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

Men in the Same Boat By J. D. BERESFORD and ESME WYNNE-TYSON. (Hutchinson and Co., (Publishers), Ltd., London. 7*s*. 6*d*.)

Two well-known novelists have here collaborated to give us a gripping and remorseless novel. Seven men who a moment before were on board an Atlantic liner, find themselves in an open lifeboat. These seven men—a refugee, a Jew, a padre, an operator, a seaman and a philosopher—constitute a veritable microcosm that conveys to us excruciatingly the pathos of the human predicament under the conditions of a global war. One by one these seven men die; and even as they die, they cannot help looking before and after; they die regretting, hoping, doubting, arguing. One dies of thirst, another of exposure; a third in sheer despair jumps into the sea and is drowned; but, however they meet their end, their last moments are spent thinking wildly, even speculating on a problematic future life. And—"as the tree falls...so shall it lie"; the old man and the refugee, the padre and the seaman, the Jew and the operator, the Atlantic swallows them up, and yet they do not die; they are back again in the world of the living, they continue their singular careers, their souls' gyrations know no end. As we read this strange and moving story, we have a feeling that we, the readers, are ourselves involved in the destinies of these seven people; our very consciousness is heightened and we know that these storm-tossed, shipwrecked souls are with us *here*, we have seen them before, we shall see them again. Things come back to us—as they seem to come back to these seven men—as in a dream; "Surely somewhere, at some time, all this had happened before? In a dream, probably!"

The first half of *Men in the Same Boat* is almost a prose version of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner;* it is as terrible and as ruthless as that. The second half articulates a timely warning to us: we are winning World War II, perhaps; but shall we deserve and preserve the forthcoming peace? Or will our peace be only an uneasy prelude to World War III? Echo merely repeats the question!

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

The Making of the Indian Princes. By EDWARD THOMPSON. (Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, London. 20s.)

Dr. Edward Thompson has stepped into the marsh-land decades of a past century, seeking the roots of the Indian Princes. No era in our history is so damp with decadence, as it were, so utterly drained of a civilized conscience (barring rare instances); and Indian chroniclers, even if vested with philosophic calm, could cover the space only with dragging strain. A foreign observer can command more detachment. It is a matter of luck that Dr. Edward Thompson is as good a novelist as a historian; else, perhaps, he would not have sought to humanize the characters (a great many of whom have been lay-figures) that occupy the scene under depiction, Mahratta, Muslim, English, a queer confounding assemblage. The technique of humanizing historical figures is still to be gained by our own interpreters. It is time that we learnt that preoccupation with source-material would attain depth and yield the best results when allied with imaginative understanding. The work of front-rank Western historians is enriched often by this inward amalgam.

The swampy yet significant decades 1789-1819 ("The Indian Prince, far from being, as most suppose, an impressive survival from antiquity, as such entitled to the veneration called forth by the spectacle of never-challenged right, is the creation of Lord Wellesley, in his half-dozen years of dæmonic activity."), when the map of Modern India was essentially drawn, explain all the years that have followed, and a comprehensive account of them, based on contemporary diaries, letters, Minutes and unpublished Persian and Mahratti documents, as also the inevitable India Office Records, would carry no little historical weight. And the account under review attains value as much from the bold, unbiassed mind of the author as from the material he has put together.

"Our writing of India's history," Dr. Thompson admits, "is perhaps resented more than anything we have done." And he has not hesitated, as others have, to record this about Arthur Wellesley, who in after years achieved eternal glory in the British mind as the victor of Waterloo: "In the operations before Seringapatam he had slept when under orders to conduct a storm; a greater dereliction from duty than many for which he executed men without hesitation." Or this about the defeatist attitude of British soldiers during the siege of Bharatpur: "The European spearhead refused to follow their officers." Or Metcalfe's memorandum submitted to his Governor-General: "Our power in India rests upon our military superiority. It has no foundation in the affections of our subjects." Or Metcalfe again: "Our troops, European and Native, have been repulsed by inferior numbers with sticks and stones...charged by the enemy sword in hand, and driven for miles like a flock of sheep."

The Indian Princes of today, Dr. Thompson concludes, can lay no claim to sovereign rights by an appeal to history. In the years of their making they were tolerated "as buffers, and also as cesspits, into which the accumulated miseries of the rest of India could seep." Indeed, they saved the British victors from submergence. The last three chapters in the volume, slender, filling seventeen pages in all, dwell upon the Princes as a current constitutional problem.

BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

Winter Solstice. By GERALD BULLETT. (Cambridge University Press, London. 1s.)

But the Earth Abideth. By WILLIAM SOUTAR. (Andrew Dakers, Ltd., London. 5s.)

The physical suffering caused by war inevitably attains such prominence that everything else seems minute by comparison. Nevertheless, the spiritual ordeal is no less fearful than the physical; although poets—and only poets—can reveal the agony of the spirit, when, one after one, the lights go out.

The agony of the flesh let no man belittle,
But the agony of the flesh must have an end.
The agony of the spirit is the agony or terror
Of the going out of lights, one after one.

Here are two volumes of verse which, in vastly different degrees, and on utterly different levels, bear witness to the isolation of the spirit on a heath more terrible than Lear's. Mr. Bullett's remarkable poem, from which the lines just quoted are taken, might have been written if war had not devastated the earth and yet—if the phrase is permissible—possibly the war contributed to the coming of the experience which his poem expresses and enshrines.

Even we, even I, I in my middle years
Who have so far survived, with others of my age,
The two wars of our incomparable time,
Even we have known pain and fear
(Small pain, much fear, since the heart is a child)
And we understand something, though little enough,
Of the long night and the breaking heart.

And so he brings us his "pennyworth of pain."

He brings more, much more. Behind this poem is inner compulsion—a certain sign that, for its creator, the experience from which it derives bore the crest of destiny.

Can the essential quality of that experience be stated?

Too far to be found, too near to be known,
Meaning eludes our nets, the mystery
Cannot be stated.

But it can be known, and the poet has known it—the impossibility of communication. It has been said that genius is revealed only to genius. And there are themes which, no matter how masterly their expression, cannot compel, but can only invite, collaboration.

...if you untie the hard knot of the will,
Something happens that is like a miracle.
The last star quenched, the last light gone,
The last and longest and cruellest which is hope,
Darkness like a rose dawns at the still centre,
And the spirit is home.

If those lines mean nothing, the poem will mean nothing. It is clear that Mr. Bullett recognised the order of the theme with which he was concerned, otherwise he would not have prefaced his poem with this sentence from *The Cloud of Unknowing*:

Be wary that thou conceive not bodily that which is meant ghostly, although it be spoken in bodily words, as be these.

This is a most remarkable poem.

It is certain that Mr. Soutar's verses would not have been written if war had not overwhelmed the world.

Our age is dying of its wound,
And in its judgment-day
The accusing faces gather round
Out of calamity.

What gives these verses value is their recognition of universal tragedy; of human apostasy; of the crucifixion of Everyman—everywhere.

We are the conflict and the cause,
The pestilence and curse;
Our misdeeds still obey the laws
Which ward the universe.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON

The Art of Kathakali. By GAYANACHARYA A. C. PANDEYA. (Kitabistan, Allahabad. Rs. 5/4)

There are thirteen movements of the head (besides its natural position), seven movements of the eyebrows, thirty-six glances of the eye, nine attitudes of the neck, nine actions of the eye-balls, nine actions of the eyelids, six actions of the nose, six movements of the cheek, six movements of the lower lip, six actions of the chin, four kinds of facial expressions and six actions of the mouth.

Such, the author tells us, is the analysis of the movements of the head and its parts as made by the great authority on the Indian dance, Bharatha. Then he says that of these only "nine movements of the head, six movements of the eyebrows, eleven glances of the eye and four attitudes of the neck" are used in Kathakali. But he does not say which or why they might have been selected. Why, for instance, should the nose, cheeks, and chin be immobile? Is it because of the heavy make-up? Then why omit the eyelids, eyeballs, and lower lip or curb the eye? Which glances of the eye are taboo? This information would have given the reader more insight into the psychology peculiar to this highly stylised dance than barren tabulations, interesting though these may be from the point of view of the general technique of the Indian dance.

Enlightening also would have been a description of the ragas and raginis employed. These are not mentioned, though a whole chapter is given to *talas* for which a script unintelligible to the general reader is used. But the list of drums given is fascinating.

The mudras, or poses of the hand, are well and clearly defined. Sixty-four poses of the hand, we are told, form a vocabulary of 500 words. That is most exciting and we are just getting enthusiastic about this precise and elaborate language of gesture when we are deflated by the statement that the average Kathakali dancer attains perfection in the use of only four. The drawings would have been more helpful if each had been placed beside its respective definition.

The three photographs of the head-dress and make-up of Ravana and Hanuman are fine, a distinct enhancement of the text. Why are there not more? There is not one of the dance in progress, nor the full costume of a single dancer. The innocent reader might easily be led to conclude from such illustrations as are given that both Uday Shankar and Nataraj (*vide* cover design) are Kathakali artists. Are they? Is "The Rhythm of Life" considered to be a Kathakali drama? It is inexplicably the only dance-drama to receive more than passing mention. And the reference to Wagner is unfortunate. Dancing plays no part in his operas, which are song-dramas.

Though marred throughout by a regrettable looseness of thought, the book shows learning and research. Considered as an introduction to the art of Kathakali for the foreigner, its language presents a formidable obstacle. But it should prove a useful handbook for Indian dancers who do not read their own languages—if there are any such.

LILA RAY

The Truth About Herbs. By MRS. C. F. LEYEL. (Andrew Dakers, Ltd. London. 4*s.* 6*d.*)

The present war has caused a serious shortage of many essential drugs and medicines. It is a sign of the times that attention is being paid to a variety of indigenous herbs, which have suffered in the past from neglect and perhaps the contempt bred of familiarity. Herbalism is defined as the art of healing by the use of non-poisonous herbs, administered internally and externally in various forms. But this book, which would otherwise deserve a welcome, is unfortunately handicapped by two faults. Firstly, it is partisan, being the herbalist's case against the Pharmacy and Medicines Act of 1941; and, secondly, it makes definite popular appeal to the credulous layman.

Herbalism, properly practised, doubtless has a place in society, and Mrs. Leyel is careful to point out that she wants "to work in collaboration with doctors and not in opposition to them." She tells us of her work as a consultant herbalist and how she became one not by intention but purely as a result of the demand for medicinal herbs. The publisher's note tells us, further, that this book is addressed "above all to the sick and ailing, especially those suffering from so-called incurable diseases...." It is at this point that we begin to ask questions, for Mrs. Leyel is not a doctor. She tells us that each herb "has a specific sphere of influence on the body" and she is able to quote examples such as the "blue forget-me-not, which acts on the left lower lung." She also tells us that the herbs, being non-poisonous, can do no harm even if they do no good. But this is not enough, for delay means disaster in many cases. Prescribing medicines, whether orthodox or unorthodox, surely demands a detailed and accurate basic knowledge of physiology, anatomy, pathology etc. With such a basis there still remains plenty of scope for divergence of opinion, for disagreement amongst doctors is proverbial. But that basis must be there before any scheme of medicine can be regarded by the thoughtful layman as scientific. The obvious solution is for Mrs. Leyel's pupils to take medical degrees before commencing to practise herbalism.

IRENE R. RAY

Lord of the Horizon. By JOAN GRANT. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 9*s.*6*d.*)

Here is a novel that professes to describe a certain chain of events relating to the Egypt of five thousand years ago; the names are unfamiliar; some of the customs described are rather strange, and we never once hear of a Baby Tank or of a Flying Fortress. But we presently realize that Miss Grant's theme is primarily Man, and that her book is of today and of all time. No doubt Miss Grant knows her Egypt thoroughly; this and her two previous novels and many short stories on the subject show that the Egypt of five thousand years ago is ground as familiar to her as is modern London to Mr. H. G. Wells. It would, however, appear that Man's problems are ever the same; the problems are solved again and again, and yet they disconcertingly spring up, assuming new names and new features.

The "Lord of the Horizon" is Roidahn, leader of the Eyes of Horus;

it is Roidahn that puts an end to the tyranny of the eleventh dynasty and places Amenemhet on the Pharaohs' throne. The new régime starts building national happiness on the secure base of the individual's happiness; fear is banished from the people's hearts and as a general rule love reigns in its stead. While the self-divided and anguished Amenemhet dominates the human story, considerable space is also given to describing the methods followed by the new régime to ensure the happiness of the people; institutions, like the Exiles' Village and the Home of Orphans, are repeatedly referred to; and questions of policy are often debated at length. The burden of the novel is that victory in war could become a tragedy "if in peace we were to forget the need for leadership." Fortunately for Ancient Egypt, Amenemhet and his associates supplied this leadership and brought peace and prosperity to the Two Lands.

The Pharaoh, the Lord of the Horizon, Ra-ab Hoteb the narrator, and the other principal characters are a study in leadership; but they are also actors in a tense human drama, bordering on the eerie and the tragic. It cannot be said that these two aspects quite coalesce into a harmonious work of art; but *Lord of the Horizon* is none-the-less a notable achievement—it is a good story, it is an inspiring testament, and it is a tract for the times.

K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar

The Rig-Vedic Culture of the Prehistoric Indus. By Swami Sankarananda, with a Foreword by Bhupendra Nath Dutta. (Ramakrishna Vedanta Mutt, 198, Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Rs. 4/8 and Rs. 5/-)

Since the publication by the late Lokamanya Tilak of the *Arctic Home of the Vedas*, Rig-Vedic culture and civilization have attracted the attention of Orientalists, and the excavations at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa have been responsible for sensational discoveries. In this booklet Swami Sankarananda has undertaken an original systematic refutation of the theory urged by Sir John Marshall that the prehistoric Indus-Valley civilization should be deemed "Non-Aryan" in origin. Dr. Dutta has pointedly refuted the theories usually styled "Aryan," "Nordic" and "Proto-nordic" as speculations, having no existence in the world of realities.

In a series of arguments such as the absence from the Vedas of any mention of the temple, of horses, or of ass-drawn vehicles and the mention of the parabolic saw and the undeveloped mid-ribbed spearhead, he has definitely distinguished the Indian civilization from that of the Sumerians.

The culture of the prehistoric Indus Valley was, according to the author, decidedly "Vedic" in character and origin. He amplifies this statement by copious citations from the *Rig-Veda* such as are also found in some of the later Upanishads as in, for instance, "*Om-iti-asau-tapati*," where the "*Om*" significantly refers to the Sun and *not* to Saguna-Brahman as interpreted today. The author strongly controverts the association of the worship of the phallus symbol with any indecent sex-cult. The phallus is symbolical, according to him, of Sun-worship.

All the lines of evidence gathered by

the author in support of the Aryan origin of the Indus-Valley civilization cannot be even fully indicated here, let alone discussed. I shall permit myself a single comment. The author's view that in Satya-Yuga society and marriage were conspicuous by their absence is unfounded. Both were ideal and perfect then. The authors of the main work and the Foreword are to be complimented on the new light they have shed on a forgotten chapter of ancient Indian culture and civilization, history and chronology.

M. A. RUCKMINI

CORRESPONDENCE

THE SUPREME RIGHT OF MAN

A Committee, we are glad to learn from the December ARYAN PATH, has been working on a Declaration of Rights, widening the basis to make it world-wide. Time and again Declarations of Man's Rights have been put forward, but with what result ? Nothing of abiding value has been achieved in the direction of real freedom. The cause lies hidden in the very roots of our modern civilisation.

The serious defect in all the "Declarations" is that they are lacking in spirituality. And it is in reshaping the so-called rights of man on a spiritual basis that India can make a distinct contribution to the understanding of the true nature of freedom.

While our leaders are vociferously demanding freedom from foreign domination, they seem willing slaves to the political theories of the West. They speak of rights and freedom from the democratic or the communistic point of view. Gone are their roots in our ancient culture; firm is their faith in Western industrialism, communism, socialism. Let us set our face steadily against all these allurements, and ask how an apostle of non-violence should view human rights and human freedom.

The basic principles of the numerous declarations of rights, including the Atlantic Charter, have been conceived against the background of a materialistic society. Its foundations rest on the faith that this world is the beginning and the end of existence, that this life is the only life, and therefore that the satisfaction of man's needs is the only goal worth striving for. These Western ideas of Rights and Freedom seek to ensure a certain type of "good" life. They vouchsafe satisfaction of hunger, sex and gregarious and acquisitive propensities, and the allaying of fear and anger. But is a society in which man can have these primitive needs satisfied the goal toward which all human endeavour should be directed ? Decidedly not. Society is only a means toward an end—the realisation of man's spiritual nature. And if in the pursuit of this spiritual goal man finds society a hindrance rather than a help, the most fundamental right of man is the right to disregard society, if necessary. This right was recognised in the ancient scheme of the four Asramas of Hinduism. The Vanaprastha and the Sanyasin have the right to renounce society and live away from it, while

claiming support from society.

It is man's goal that determines his rights. To the Hindu the goal is the realisation of Brahman. This world should be viewed only as an incident in the great scheme of evolution which ends in man's finding his true spiritual nature in Deity. Society, at present organised on a physical basis, is bound to come into conflict with the higher spiritual ideals of man. It may, if the need arises, be set aside by those in search of the highest truth. One condition of support from society may, of course, be laid on the renouncer —that he should have earned it by service rendered in his younger days.

Professor Joad, when Mr. Wells published his first draft of the "Rights," wanted the "Right to Commit Suicide" added. Now, the desire for suicide is generated in the mind of a man who has fallen out with society, and yet is not able to see beyond it. What is needed is not the abolition of personality by suicide, but the abolition of society, so far as the individual is concerned, by the latter's renouncing it, as in pursuing the Sanyasin's ideal of life. Where there is no renunciation, and no detachment, there can be no spirituality.

What is the freedom that democratic countries consider worth fighting for ? The political philosophers have neglected the psychological to over-emphasise the environmental factors. Freedom is free activity, in regard to which three factors have to be considered : (1) the behaving self, (2) its body, the seat of behaviour, and (3) the environment, the scene of activity. The second and the third have been studied by the social psychologist and the sociologist. The first, however, has not received the attention it deserves.

The real springs of action lie in the mind, not in the external world. There are certain innate propensities : fear, anger, sympathy, etc., which when stimulated impel man to a certain course to reach a particular goal. " Free " behaviour is behaviour which is progressing smoothly towards the goal prescribed by the innate psychological structure of the mind of the behaving agent. It is in the goal that the secret of Freedom is to be found.

Freedom is determined by the innate constitution of the mind. Action is controlled by the mental structure, and this in its turn determined by innate and acquired factors. So long as man is activated by innate propensities and acquired sentiments, that is, so long as man is moved by desires, so long will he be in bondage to the external world. Freedom, therefore, is impossible for one who is *in* the world, and also *of* it. True freedom can come only through the annihilation of both native propensities and acquired sentiments, only by drying up the spring of desires.

Man's behaviour is controlled by the scale of sentiment values with the master-sentiment which each determines for himself. What should be the master-sentiment of a person who is free or seeking real freedom ? If, following the example of the West, one makes self-regard, service or patriotism one's master-sentiment, then one will surely be caught in earthly desire. But if, following the Vedantic tradition, we make the final merging of the soul in the Godhead, our goal, then in the very process of attaining it, all desire will be consumed, all

instincts and propensities as well as sentiments dissolved, and true freedom attained. True freedom is freedom from slavery to earthly desires, and freedom to attain the Godhead. The Jivan-Mukta is the only person who is truly free.

The Supreme Right of Man, then, is the Right to realise to the fullest extent his spiritual nature, and, as a corollary, the Right nobly to defy the society that hinders him in his search for God. All rights take rank below this Supreme Right in proportion as they contribute to it. This Right, which was implied in the last stage of the four Asramas of the ancient Hindus, is what a sincere apostle of non-violence has to contribute to the discussion of the Rights of Man.

P. S. NAIDU

The University, Allahabad.

INDUSTRIALISM AND INDIA'S FUTURE

In "India's Problem of Problems: The Fixed Attitude," in the December ARYAN PATH, Madan Gopal says that the hope of India lies in her industrialisation. "The history of Europe shows that it can be left to the machine to shatter the existing social fabric." In introducing this article the Editor adopts the opposite attitude, fearing that industrialisation might indeed "shatter the existing social fabric," and pointing to Western society as an object-lesson in the evils to be expected from industrialisation.

Great Indian leaders such as Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, it seems to me, sum up very well the attitude of India. Do we want industrialisation? Can we preserve the inherent characteristics of Indian life if we accept it? Ghastly tragedies have gone hand in hand with machine domination in the West! Can India have anything to do with industrialisation without becoming contaminated by it, and calling into her quiet ways of life all its furor and intensity?

These questions, being asked by enlightened men and women throughout this great country, are imperative and demand an intelligent answer. But who shall give it? Look at the incredible mess the Westerners have got themselves into. They are certainly the last we would think of turning to for advice upon an issue of such supreme importance to the future of India. And it is important. Let us not deceive ourselves with a comfortable shrug, and the assurance that this, in common with great problems of the past, will somehow fade away and leave behind the India we have always known and loved. It is true that, following the laws of the universe, this problem will fade away, as others have done, for nature is a great solver of the apparently insurmountable problems which humanity makes for itself. But in passing it will NOT leave things as they were. The greatest law of the universe is the law of change. In the infinite universe there is no standing still!

Most have refused to change, and the inexorable power of advancement, sometimes slowly, sometimes with unexpected swiftness, has engulfed them. The cycle has been repeated with such regularity throughout the short period of the world's existence which we call

"History" that it seems incomprehensible how succeeding nations failed to learn the lesson from their predecessors. But they ascribed their predecessors' downfall to everything except the right thing, and then went on to commit the same mistakes.

Nevertheless, during all this time something wonderful has been taking place, however insignificant in the eyes of the worldly great. During all these thousands of years of rise and fall in the nations of the world, the common man has been learning to recognise himself as the greatest power in the world, and finding out that there is nothing he cannot achieve with sufficient industry.

It is not necessary for me to detail his achievements in the material realm within one hundred years. But if we are to obtain a true answer to whether the industrial era has meant a real advance we must go below the surface of material accomplishment, to examine the heart of man. For just as material achievements have come from the mind of man, so the answer to whether he can survive the impact of what he has made will be found in the heart of the ordinary man and woman.

Despite the upheaval of the age of industrialism, if man can lift his mind above the material aspects of his achievements and learn to search his heart for guidance and fresh inspiration, he must inevitably come through this period of trial and refinement and learn to place his feet firmly on the pathway which leads to divine Life. And this will be achieved, as Tagore has said in other words, by the increasing emancipation of the ordinary man. The future of civilisation rests in his hands. If he wisely chooses to walk in the paths of the highest spiritual values, a glorious era lies before him. If, however, he allows himself to be blinded by the pride of his material accomplishments, he will fall headlong into an abyss of chaos, from which he and his civilisation will not come out without decades of sorrow and striving.

We stand today not as separate nations with different problems, but as one globe faced with the same problem. It is not really a question of whether or not India should accept industrialism. Industry is not in itself an evil. It is a tremendous agency for good. It is what mankind does with industry that will determine whether evil or good follows in its wake.

India has always laid great stress on spiritual values, and the world has never stood in greater need of a right sense of those values. The industrial era in the West brought with it excessive materialism, which has temporarily blunted the edge of the Western world's perception of spiritual values. The West in the past had as keen a sense of these values as the East, and I do not doubt that there will be a rebirth in the West when her peoples have suffered enough from their own folly to awaken them. But India stands today with all the accumulated experience and the mistakes of the Western nations at her disposal. Also at her disposal are all their worth-while physical accomplishments whereby they have been able to carry forward to a remarkable degree the emancipation of the ordinary man. Can India take these accomplishments and use them for the benefit of her own labouring and poverty-stricken millions, that they may be emancipated to give the world new ideas from their own fountains of inspiration? Can she do this and at the same time avoid the mistakes of the Western nations? If India, through her enlightened men and women can answer YES, then industrialism will bring to this country only blessings, and there will be no fear of a shattering of the social fabric. Instead, Indians will learn to weave new patterns of a broader and richer life experience upon their social fabric.

L. E. MOORE

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"_____*ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

The Editor of *The Indian Social Reformer* challenges in his 25th December issue Mr. M. R. A. Baig's solution of the communal issue. In a recent speech at Bombay Mr. Baig proposed "a decommunalising of ourselves," the voluntary giving up of communal habits by both of the largest Indian communities. "Nothing," he declared, "should be Indian that is not partly Hindu and partly Muslim."

The Editor pronounces Mr. Baig's solution "a disguised plea for Westernisation." Many in the older days expected to gain favour by Westernising themselves, he says. But they found

that the nearer they got to the ruling class, the more they were disliked and in fact denounced as unrepresentative of India. Indianisation of Government services has only led to the denationalisation of Indians.

Dominionhood, not independence, the Editor declares, would be the logical fulfilment of this Anglicising process.

We do not favour the giving up of any element of value in any Indian community or language. One of the chief charms of the Indian scene is its variety of races, creeds and tongues. This variety is not our weakness but our strength, a treasury of untold richness if we but view it in the right way. Fortunately sameness is not the price of harmony.

If the proposal to do away with differences is designed to make us tolerable to each other it is not flattering either to intelligence or character. We do not want mutual toleration but mutual appreciation and mutual sympathy. If all the engaging variations are to be done away with, what will be left to appreciate when we develop sufficient discrimination to accept each other at our true worth? It would be a deadly dull world if we had to meet ourselves at every turn! Let us study each other's cultures so that we can appreciate them properly.

The root of the problem of University education was considered by Sir Mirza Ismail in his speech on "Education and the New Social Order" at the recent Jaipur session of the All-India Educational Conference. He viewed it as the due relation of the Universities to the social order. The creation of such a relation transcended in importance the questions of length of course and method of instruction, including the language medium. Substantial changes in both content and method would be necessary to bring education in line with the New Social Order which was emerging as a definite ideal. The curricula from the primary stage onward, Sir Mirza declared, should give special emphasis to the problems of Indian society.

If we always apply the practical test of citizenship, we shall not go far wrong, provided that we remember that the "useless" sort of study is of value in the deepest

sense. The citizen will be better even as citizen if his inward life is clear and fine.

And Sir Mirza recognises with a clarity we wish all our statesmen and educators shared, that education "must deliberately endeavour to foster mutual understanding and friendly feeling between communities."

It is well that the recognition is spreading that something has to be done for our underprivileged millions. That they are perhaps the most patient people in the world offers no excuse for their continued exploitation. Let us not try their patience too far, lest we court a lesson in the truth of the proverb, "Beware the anger of the patient man!" The Prime Minister of Jaipur State concluded his address with the uncompromising assertion that

what matters first and most is that all our people should have food, clothing, security, comfort and hope. And not one step in education can be taken, or is worth attempting, unless we are determined to satisfy these human needs.

The importance of the primary school in the educational pattern was emphasised by Mr. K. G. Saiyadain at the same conference. Presiding over the Primary and Rural Education Section, the Director of Education of Jammu and Kashmir State drew a sorry picture of the "Cinderella of the educational family." Education as a whole had received very step-motherly treatment in the matter of funds and public attention, but primary education, neither universal nor free nor compulsory, had fared worst.

Whatever education *is* actually provided, is meagre, inadequate, poor in content, backward in methods, out-of-date in organization and entrusted to teachers, who are, as a rule, ill-qualified, untrained and paid scandalously low salaries.

When we were intelligent and reasonable enough to do so, he said, we should be amazed at the wealth of creative talent and capacity which education would release, and which now went disastrously to waste because the educational net was not wide enough.

And the foundations of this waste are well and truly laid in our primary schools where a futile attempt is made to "educate" children at the annual cost of about Rs. 8 per child as against a reasonable minimum of Rs. 132/- per annum worked out by the Educational Adviser to the Government of India in his Memorandum.

The attitude towards primary education rested on the fallacy that talent and capacity and intelligence were concentrated in the socially and economically more fortunate classes. The type of primary education provided to the comparatively small proportion of the masses who received any at all, was not such as to give "any intellectual or cultural enrichment, or to develop any progressive ideology, or to achieve any kind of self-expression." The lack of such results had been most unfairly pointed to as vindicating a low opinion of the potentialities of the masses. Better education was bound up with a better social order.

The lack of continuity between the atmosphere of home and school, which the Wardha Scheme was addressed to remedying, is another major drawback. But even the Wardha Scheme is unworkable without funds. Everyone interested in the country's good must echo Mr. Saiyadain's plea for generous and imaginative planning for the Indian primary school.

The presidential address of Sir J. C. Ghosh at the Annual General Meeting

of the National Institute of Sciences of India, held at Delhi on 30th December, dealt *inter alia* with the need for a National Research Council for India. Such a Council, it is brought out in the adaptation of that address in *Science and Culture* for January, is an objective, not yet implemented, of the Institute, founded in 1935. Article 2 (d) reads :—

> To act through properly constituted National Committees, in which other learned Academies and Societies will be associated, as the National Research Council of India, for undertaking such scientific work of national and international importance as the Council may be called upon to perform by the public and by Government.

Every well-considered move towards better co-ordination of constructive effort must be welcomed. There is no doubt that such co-ordination as a National Research Council should make possible would be in the interest of greater effectiveness. That, whether the joint undertaking were keyed to a destructive end, such as the strengthening of war effort, or a constructive one, such as a concerted, urgently needed endeavour to improve living conditions in India. But much depends upon what the end is. The proposed devotion of one per cent. of the national income to research would be justified only if such research succeeded in improving appreciably the wretched state in which our Indian masses live. If it did that, it would pay dividends out of all proportion to the investment.

The problems involved in such concerted effort are a small-scale replica of those facing world confederation. Just as a workable federation of nations is not possible without agreement to certain limitations of national sovereignty, so co-ordinated research must involve some encroachment on the autonomy of institutions and the freedom of individual workers. The solution will lie in keeping that inevitable encroachment to the minimum consonant with success, and in safeguarding science from political domination.

Analysis is the very essence of science, as synthesis is of philosophy. Analytical thought is the thought-form of the age, but the pendulum has swung too far towards divisiveness. Increasing specialisation in science is but one aspect of the general trend. The National Research Council will perform a useful function if it serves as a clearing-house (1) of projects, to prevent unwitting and unnecessary duplication, and (2) of results obtained. To pool the specialised findings of separate sciences in a common fund of knowledge is the first step towards a synthesis, on which a true philosophy of modern science can be built.

Prof. P. N. Shrinivasachari, in his presidential address at the Lahore session of the Indian Philosophy Congress on 21st December, ascribed the present threat to civilisation to the decadence of faith in moral values and human dignity.

> It is the supreme task of the philosopher to restore the higher ideals of life and reconstruct society on a moral and spiritual basis.

Indian philosophy had always had as its dominant characteristic the synthesis of the theoretical and the practical sides of human nature. He emphatically refuted the charge that Indian philosophy was "world-negating, and indifferent to the needs of love and social service." But what was

needed, he declared, was a "new synoptic outlook," which would "combine the seriousness of the thinker with the social virtues of the man of action."

India's service to the world was the gift of her spirituality. The political ideals of the West could be spiritualised if the deep meaning of liberty, equality and fraternity were recognised as Indian philosophy presents it.

The freedom of man is the freedom of the self-development of divinity in man. The equality of men implies the recognition of the same Godhead in all human beings and the ideal of brotherhood is a unity of mind and feeling based upon the inner spirituality of man.

The Indian philosopher had a responsibility, he said, to point the way out of the present confusion. But it is not enough to point to the way out. We have to walk it. The salesman is a failure if he cannot demonstrate the way his gadget works. Let us but demonstrate convincingly the effectiveness of these ideals as a way of life and there can be no doubt the world will hear us gladly. Otherwise, not only may the truths that we inherited, but have not lived, fall on deaf ears but we shall risk the taunt "Physician, heal thyself!"

The Indian Historical Records Commission which met at Aligarh on the 22nd of December is doing a valuable piece of work in the regional survey of records in private custody. Committees have been recently formed in several Indian States and at least one Province to locate valuable and interesting material in private hands, to advise in regard to its preservation and to arrange if possible for publication in the interests of scholarship and historical research.

But, as the Hon. Sir Jogendra Singh implied in his presidential address, the accumulation of such materials, important as it was, is only a step to the utilisation of the historical records so saved. Records unused may be the scholarly equivalent of a miser's hoard. "We must," he declared, "look deeply into the magic mirror of history and learn from the failures of the past the way to the successes of the future." But it is not only the failures of the past from which we can learn the lessons of the present. Past successes also have much to teach us, and not least those which show how unity has been achieved, as in "the happy fusion of Persian and Indian civilisation" to which Sir Jogendra referred.

The voices of the past, treasured in the records ranged round us here today, speak in no uncertain terms. They say we are limbs of one another and in unity is strength. The prophets of new times declare, the world must become one if it is to live and make use of the powers of nature which it has subdued to its advantage. If these powers are used for selfish ends, they who use them must perish....India must become one, nay, the world must become one, if it is to survive and enjoy the fruits which new discoveries promise to distribute.